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"The Union must and shall be preserved"

World's Best Histories

UNITED STATES

FROM THE

DISCOVERY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT UP TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY

JULIAN HAWTHORNE
(—— TO 1783)

JAMES SCHOULER
(1783 TO 1865)

E. BENJAMIN ANDREWS
(1866 TO 1904)

Illustrated

IN NINE VOLUMES

VOLUME FOUR

NEW YORK AND LONDON

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HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

VOLUME FOUR

AUTHOR'S NOTICE.

After a lapse of about three years the author presents to the public the third volume of his history, prepared in the intervals of graver professional tasks. He has pursued, as hitherto, the plan of personal research, consulting the original authorities as far as possible, and taking neither facts nor opinions at second-hand. He has sought, too, to place himself in the centre of the scenes described, and imbue his narrative with the atmosphere of the age in which men and events moved. His constant aim has been to furnish in the true sense a history of the people of the United States, their virtues, their errors, and their wonderful development.

The choice collections of two cities, the Public Library and Athenæum of Boston and the Libraries of Congress and the State Department at Washington, have been carefully studied. The author has gone through the whole unpublished Monroe correspondence at the State Department, and obtained rich materials for this volume never before explored. Through the courtesy of the Gouverneur family, the last of Monroe's lineal descendants, he has obtained other interesting information, besides examining the valuable letters still remaining in their hands. He had hoped to examine, also, the Jackson papers, long in custody of the Blairs at Washington, but a lawsuit having arisen over the title of those manuscripts, they are still withheld from inspection. Considering the ample materials brought to light by Benton and Parton, and the letters of Jackson besides, to be found in the Monroe correspondence, this is less to be regretted at the present time, and the author will, if possible, procure access to these other papers in season for the next volume. To the architect of the Capitol and other personal

friends at Washington and elsewhere, his acknowledgments are due for their kindly aid in clearing up points where the facts had become obscured in doubt.

The fourth and fifth volumes, bringing the narrative down to 1861, will appear in due course of time, and the author firmly trusts that the interest of his countrymen in his work will increase rather than diminish as it approaches completion.

J. S.

North Conway, N. H., May 15, 1885.

Notice to Revised Edition of 1904.

While preparing new plates for the present edition, the author has made a complete revision of the original text and notes. The reader's attention is specially called to "Author's Final Notes," at the end of this volume, in which important collections made lately accessible—such as the Calhoun and Jackson papers—receive special comment.

J. S.

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HISTORY

OF

THE UNITED STATES

UNDER THE CONSTITUTION.

CHAPTER X.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MONROE.

Section I.

PERIOD OF FIFTEENTH CONGRESS.

MARCH 4, 1817—MARCH 3, 1819.

MONROE was inaugurated on a day of spring sunshine, unusual for early March in the latitude of our national capital. The softness of the air, the radiance of the noonday sun, the serenity of the rural surroundings, from wooded heights to the placid Potomac, carried a sense of tranquil happiness to the hearts of thousands of spectators who had assembled for the out-of-door ceremonies on Capitol Hill. No accident or mishap from sunrise to midnight marred the peaceful pleasure of the auspicious occasion. 1817. March 4.

These public ceremonies had most of the usual accompaniments of a Presidential inauguration. There was an escort to Capitol Hill, and back through Pennsylvania Avenue, made up, as in those times was customary, of District militia, regulars, and marines, together with a large cavalcade of citizens and others whom a Virginian executive might well regard as friends and neighbors. The retiring and the incoming President rode together in

friendly companionship. There was the usual brief reception in the Senate Chamber, where Tompkins, the Vice-President elect, had just been sworn into office; the adjournment to a portico outside, where, in sight of the assembled multitude and surrounded by members of Congress and the high officers of the republic, the chief magistrate elect read his manuscript address, at whose close, Marshall, the Chief Justice, attired in a black gown, administered the simple oath. Then followed an artillery salute, loud cheers, and the commotion of a dispersing crowd. The new President, like his predecessor, received congratulations in the afternoon and attended in the evening a public ball.

But in one marked particular Monroe's inauguration differed from all others before or since. Though the ceremonies took place on Capitol Hill, they were conducted at a little distance from the historical or hallowed ground; in fact, some hundred rods to the north-east of those ruined and smoke-stained wings of the Capitol, whose renovation had lately commenced, and in front of a new and unpretentious brick building which Daniel Carroll and others had erected soon after the British invasion, and leased to the government for the accommodation of the national legislature.* On an elevated portico, here erected for the special occasion, stood Monroe when he pronounced his inaugural address; and, as he spoke, he and his auditors might contemplate an impressive spectacle. Yonder monumental piles, which marked the site of our former demolished national temple, were rising once again, slowly but safely, better proportioned, with an enlarged area, the walls resting upon their original foundations. Fragments of the old marble columns, consumed by intense heat, and blocks of freestone which were cracked and utterly spoiled, had ere this been removed from the north wing of the Capitol, where British desecration did its worst; in the south wing, though columns and the vault they supported stood com-

* See vol. ii, pp. 415, 457.

paratively uninjured, much had to be taken down, that a space might be cleared for rebuilding; so that at the present point of progress the work of architect and builder typified immortal hope blossoming afresh out of the relics of despair. This scene, which nature kindled into resplendent brightness, found no expression in Monroe's unimaginative and premeditated utterances; but silently it deepened, we may rest assured, the lesson which was spoken. The key-note of his address was renewed faith in the Union. He dwelt upon the happy vindication of our republican experiment through war as well as peace; upon the renewed prosperity of the American people, and an increasing harmony of States and sections, which he pledged himself to promote. Peace and recuperation, peace and national unity,—these were the sentiments of the day and the occasion.*

Monroe had come into the Presidency at a time and under circumstances most opportune for reconciling the jarring sections, and becoming in person the great pacificator of our national politics. He had earned promotion to the highest office by long and meritorious public service; he had proved himself under Madison the most useful of civilians in a great crisis, as well as the most trusted. Nor had Monroe shrunk from assuming responsibility in that crisis; for when, in 1814, he had charge of the War Department, and a conscription seemed inevitable, he frankly told his friends, who were preparing to nominate him to the Presidency, that as he must take the odium of

* Inaugural address, March 4, 1817; Washington Intelligencer; Niles's Register. And see Congressional Documents, embracing reports of Commissioners of Public Buildings, etc., 1817; Senate Documents, February, 1822. The building which served as the temporary "Congress Hall" at this time was substantially that which was known during the late civil war as the Capitol prison; it was built upon square 728, and, as remodelled, constitutes now a block of private dwelling-houses, which are occupied by men well known in official station. It may be added that the President's mansion, though nearly rebuilt, was not yet ready for Monroe's reception, so that the inaugural escort was to and from a private dwelling-house.

proposing and executing so unpopular a measure, they ought to put him aside.* War ended suddenly, and without a conscription ; and now he had been chosen President by a vote so expressive of popular confidence, that ever since the day of election, when it became clear that political parties could rally no longer on the old issues, politicians of all parties had been hastening to assure him of their friendship and to tender their co-operation. Monroe was, however, no theorist, but a sagacious, experienced, and withal an honorable statesmen ; one, moreover, who had been brought up in the school of Republicanism. Two things he felt were essential in any event to a successful administration : one that it should lean primarily on those who had brought it into power ; the other that it should be composed of harmonious and not distracting elements. For no reunion of political parties can be more false or deceptive than that which consists in dividing up the official patronage among the old leaders, victors and vanquished alike. To call in men who had inflexibly opposed the late war, and whose pride must have been deeply wounded by its results, meant only distraction and constant embarrassment, besides giving to the world the false impression that America had become ashamed of her own cause. Moreover, the chosen candidate of a party should not be perfidious to that party. Hence, in the private correspondence between himself and Jackson, already alluded to, † Monroe had pronounced himself in favor of keeping the government in the hands of its decided friends,—of those who had stood firm in the day of trial. But at the same time he expressed the desire to indulge a spirit of moderation towards late opponents, to discrimi-

* See vol ii, p. 424 ; Monroe MSS.

† See vol. ii, p. 462 ; Monroe MSS. ; 26 Niles's Register, 160–166 (1824). This correspondence was carried on in entire confidence soon after the Presidential election, and before Monroe was inaugurated. We shall see, however, hereafter that the letters were published years later, when Jackson became a candidate for the Presidency, those signed by him making a remarkable impression in his favor among the old Federalists.

nate among them, and to bring all into one fold as quietly as possible.

"Many men highly distinguished for their talents," wrote Monroe, "are of opinion that the existence of the Federal party is necessary to keep union and order in the Republican ranks; that is, that free governments cannot exist without parties. This is not my opinion. That the ancient republics were always divided into parties; that the English government is maintained by an opposition—that is by the existence of a party in opposition to the ministry—I well know. But I think that the cause of these divisions is to be found in certain defects of those governments rather than in human nature; and that we have happily avoided those defects in our system." *

The political tenets thus expressed were not those of the old school of statesmen. Neither Adams nor Jefferson believed that free government could exist without contending parties; and such at this day is the popular belief, though many appear to insist that the public welfare requires their own party to be constantly intrenched in power while the opposition remains as constantly excluded. Nevertheless that old parties may so dissolve and old party names disappear, as to afford for a season the beautiful spectacle of a whole people re-united and knit firmly together in fraternal affection, there is no reason to doubt. Taken in their natural course, parties organize, disorganize, and reorganize, as vital issues change. Within seventy-five years passed away the Anti-Federal, the Federal, the first Republican, the Whig, the Native American parties. When, therefore, in some clearly defined and overwhelming political conflict producing fixed and lasting results, one set of political leaders has wholly lost and the other has wholly won, a dissolution of parties should ensue. To keep old wounds open, to lacerate the vanquished, becomes rather the effort of the ambitious and unprincipled, who are unwilling to disband their followers, than of a people like ours, who yearn for recon-

* 26 Niles's Register, 160–166.

ciliation and hasten to renew their intercourse. Here a magnanimous policy is the true and the safer one; and the administration that persecutes without crushing, compels new constitutional infractions to punish old ones, and leads out its party as it was before, has cruelly abused its opportunity. None, however, but a President of comprehensive views, sound discretion, and irreproachable honor can accomplish the needful task of exterminating old party divisions and giving new strength and direction to the government. To such a task at the present time Monroe addressed himself, with a confidence in results that was not misplaced.

As the last of the great Virginian executives identified with our early national history, Monroe challenges respect as one who had preserved for his own administration the ripe fruit of former experience. He was proud of his native State and of all who had given it imperishable renown. A filial follower of the great Jefferson, whom he still consulted on public affairs, and of whose confidence in the popular instinct he freely partook, he had nevertheless convinced himself, in the course of a long diplomatic service abroad, that jealous nations were not to be restrained from aggression by the maxims of peace and philanthropy. To Madison he resorted for advice still more constantly; and that worthiest of friends and wisest of advisers shone, when finally relieved of the executive direction, in a most becoming sphere. But Monroe did not confine himself to the old Republican circles of influence. Marshall he admired. Nor could his heart cease to own its secret allegiance to Virginia's greatest of sons, the first President. The memory of a personal difference with Washington left a sad but mellowing influence. Though Monroe always believed that injustice was done him in his recall from France in 1796, his resentment had turned gradually from chief executive to a partisan cabinet and then had dried up altogether; possibly, too, as experience and reflection strengthened him, he came to ascribe much of the blame to himself.* Be this

* See vol. i, pp. 317, 361.

as it may, by the time of his accession to the Presidency, the illustrious example of the first incumbent had become with Monroe an overpowering influence. In official methods and intercourse he aimed at restoring something of its pristine dignity to the chief magistracy. He travelled through the States north and south as Washington had done, to acquaint himself better with the condition and sentiments of the people. He sought the same high plane of unpartisan service. Without Washington's commanding presence, transcendent fame, or superb endowments, he nevertheless had grown to resemble him strongly in predominant traits of character; and, more especially, in an honest sincerity of purpose to administer well; in habits of patient and deliberate investigation, all contending arguments being weighed dispassionately; and in a fixed determination not to be influenced in a public trust by private considerations. Even in personal looks the last Virginian, with his placid and sedate expression of face, regular features, and a grayish-blue eye, which invited confidence, had come to appear not unlike the first; so that in these years the names of Washington and Monroe became naturally coupled together. This resemblance, however, was most nearly like that of father and son, where the one, whose character was the stronger, has inspired awe, while the other touches rather the cord of personal sympathy by the blending of softer maternal traits.

Towards his grand exemplar Monroe's later yearnings were indeed those of a surviving son, loved but perhaps disowned; and he preserved with touching constancy the details of a strange story which circulated in Virginia circles. Washington, it was said, loved the young Monroe to his death; and his death was owing, not so much to an accidental personal exposure to the weather on an inclement day, according to the usual report, as to the chagrin which preyed on his mind after he saw how the fall election had resulted. For a Republican victory in Virginia brought Monroe from retirement into the governor's chair, and Washington felt that his own State rebuked him for a

harshness he had long regretted but had never atoned for.*

In imitation of Washington, Monroe, soon after his inauguration, made an extended tour northward. Its results were remarkable in re-establishing that fraternal spirit which he had pledged himself to restore, and in binding together once more States friendly and States disaffected to the cause of the Union during the late war. The state of Monroe's health, which needed relaxation, favored such a journey; so, too, the desire to gain personal information; nor had the invitation of Otis and his Boston associates been forgotten.† But the immediate occasion of the tour was to inspect and draw public attention to the new system of coast fortifications, which, with the sanction of the late Congress, was progressing under the capable direction of General Bernard, a French officer, who brought letters from Lafayette, and remained until the work was in substance completed.

May 31-July. Accompanied by General Swift, of the Engineer Corps, and a private secretary, the new President set out modestly on the 31st of May from the seat of government, first visiting Baltimore, where a battle monument was being erected, thence proceeding to Philadelphia, New York City, and the New England States; not unmindful of his public duties on the way, but accepting hospitalities, which more and more resembled, as he advanced, a pageant in which all prominent citizens shared, regardless of late political differences. De Witt Clinton and Rufus King participated in the welcome at New York. In Boston, where the ovation culminated in a national jubilee, Harrison Gray Otis, of Hartford Convention renown, received him with eloquent salutation. Here, too, Governor Brooks, Otis, and Quincy vied in personal attentions with Dearborn, Commodores Bainbridge and Perry, and the ven-

* Monroe MSS.

† See vol. ii, p. 461.

erable John Adams; and the President, remaining several days in the vicinity, with headquarters assigned him at the Exchange Coffee-House, then the largest hotel in America, but burned down the next year, visited Gore, Perkins, and other prominent Federalists, among others, dined in company with Lloyd and Pickering, as well as men of his own party stripe, and hob-nobbed in good fellowship with both Federalists and Republicans, as though the past should be forgotten. The manner of his entry into Boston, for which the legislature of the State made due provision, had been arranged with great exactness. A cavalcade of citizens, arranged in 16 divisions, was followed by 150 truckmen, well mounted and dressed in white frocks; this procession, more than a mile in length, defiled slowly down Washington and the other chief streets in presence of some forty thousand applauding spectators; there was a military escort, and the President rode on horseback. Entering the green lawn of the Common, Monroe passed a long line of children from the public schools, youths of both sexes drawn up to meet him, many of whom wore roses red and white together, in token that all civil feuds were happily ended.*

Connecticut had already paid its becoming tribute to the new chief magistrate, New Haven being the first place where Monroe ever set foot on New England soil. In that State, however, the political situation was peculiar; for, by a renewed coalition of Republicans with the religious toleration party, after the previous year's defeat, † Oliver Wolcott, whose general views had much broadened since the days when, in President Adams's cabinet, he showed himself so obsequious to Hamilton, had just been chosen Governor by a close vote over Smith and the Church and State Federalists at the spring election. Important changes were here pending, and the spirit of faction was very bitter. Less antipathy to the old order of affairs appeared in Massachusetts, where,

* See Monroe's Tour; Boston newspapers of July, 1817, etc.

† See vol. ii, p. 461.

as against General Dearborn, an unfortunate candidate for Republicans to take up at so late a day, Governor Brooks, the moderate Federalist, lately Adjutant-General, who occupied Strong's chair, was easily re-elected. Silence on political topics was a point of good breeding in the Connecticut courtesies ; but the halls of learning and benevolent institutions were thrown courteously open, and at Hartford, the town of secret conventions, honors were appropriately paid at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.*

Throughout New England the yeomanry of the towns turned out to gaze upon the first Southern President who had been seen in that section since Washington's day, curiosity mingling with patriotic pride. Nor did the man disappoint, unless the days of idolatry were to return. They saw one whose personal appearance was plain and unaffected,—a rawboned man of nearly threescore years, above the middle size, well compacted, with long limbs hanging loosely, who was somewhat shy in manners and awkward, of grave but not unbending aspect ; one without the graces of oratory, patient rather than quickwitted, who needed time to put his thoughts together and seemed to avoid rather than court the applause so lavishly bestowed upon him, even to adulation. His frank bearing, his honest eye, which looked straight at those addressing him, his countenance graven by age into lines of serenity and kindness, bespoke a man amiable in his family, true to his friends, generous to his foes, our own fellow-citizen and our fellow-man. One would have taken him for a plain country gentleman rather than a statesman. All knew him to be great, but saw him to be simple ; and to meet him was to discover with pleasure, not that his talents were beyond his attainments, but rather that long public service had neither hardened nor corrupted him.

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*See a ludicrous anecdote related in S. G. Goodrich's Reminiscences in connection with Monroe's visit to this Asylum, which seems to indicate the latent bitterness still lurking in the hearts of Hartford Convention men. Like some other New England writers of similar antecedents, Goodrich preserves in his writings the prejudices of a noted Federalist family against both "the Jameses" of Virginia.

In dress the new President recalled to beholders the past, being clad in the undress uniform of a Revolutionary officer, with blue coat, buff underdress, and cocked hat. And in newspapers which described his eastern tour one might find traces of the same ceremonial homage which prevailed in Washington's day. He was accosted like a New England governor as "Your Excellency." Formal addresses were presented from seminaries and municipal bodies, couched in pompous and commonplace phrase, which called for corresponding answer; and press writers inflated once more the popular sentiment to the proper pitch of exaltation. For journalists and the ruling set were still wont to take the public by the hand like Sabbath scholars. It was a great, a solemn affair, to entertain a President, and suggested much by way of moral improvement. But no hyperbole was needful to touch the heart of New England. Its people longed for reconciliation, for unity, for a new national development. Monroe understood that longing, and gratified it. Why were Revolutionary flags and relics produced from the old chests and wardrobes? What meant these arches of evergreens and festoons of roses; these pious visits to sires of '76 and the old battlefields; these gatherings of the Cincinnati and heroes of 1812, of soldiers and civilians, of Federalists and Republicans in mass? Their united honors were not paid merely to the accidental incumbent of the chief office. They were honors to the man, and indicated the general hope that under his administration national brotherhood would be restored.

Monroe did not seek to make parade of his office, but rather to make friends. He gladly escaped the fussy pomp of civic hospitalities that he might pay an informal visit. In Philadelphia he called upon the venerable McKean, who soon after died, and he left a kind message with the afflicted family of Dallas. At Portsmouth he visited the widow of Governor Langdon. Dining with Ex-President Adams on a lovely July day, he rambled over a country road with his suite to pay Josiah Quincy an afternoon visit; roses were in bloom, and the haymakers were busy; the call was a

cheerful one, and though Quincy clung to political prejudices, his heart must have been softened.*

It was in Boston, during the present tour, that the felicitous phrase "the era of good feeling" originated, which has since by general acclamation become the appropriate epithet of Monroe's eight-years' term.† Nor can it be doubted that such an era, for better or worse, was now ushered in, its best accompaniment being the long subsidence of popular tumults, and its worst the petty scheming of rival leaders, who must needs jostle in a port when the seas are closed. The old party lines presently began to fade. The name of "Democrat," which had been gradually acquiring favor, was dropped for a time; that of "Federalist" quite disappeared, and even Jeffersonian Republicanism lost its earlier significance.

From Boston, Monroe's tour extended as far east as Portland; thence turning back, and traversing New Hampshire and Vermont, he inspected the national defences on the Canada frontiers, visiting Sackett's Harbor, Lundy's Lane, Detroit, and other renowned localities of the late war, in company with Generals Brown and Scott, and once more, at the sunset of Sept. 17th, reaching Washington by way of Pittsburg and Hagerstown, after having well explored the thriving State of Ohio. Welcomed on his return by the inhabitants of the Federal district, he made acknowledgment of the useful information he had derived from his journey for the discharge of his official trust, and announced his gratification in witnessing, wherever he went, proofs so conclusive and so spontaneously and heartily rendered, of the devotion of our fellow-citizens

July–September.

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* See Edmund Quincy's Life of Josiah Quincy; Monroe's Tour; newspapers of the day.

† In the Boston Centinel of July 12, 1817, the writer finds a leading article headed "The Era of Good Feelings." He has met with no earlier use of this phrase, though it may have originated in some speech or public letter of neighboring date, elicited by Monroe's visit, of which no record is preserved. That the expression was first used in Boston at the time of Monroe's visit, see Niles's Register, July 12, 1823.

The United States in 1816.

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to the principles of union and a free government. "United firmly in the support of these great, these vital interests," were his words, "we may fairly presume that all difficulty on minor questions will disappear." *

Some of Monroe's friends, to whom the eastern demonstration was a surprise, expressed displeasure at first, fearing a hasty amalgamation of the politicians, amid a general partition of the patronage. But others, like Madison, Rush, Eustis, and Gallatin, took broader views consonant with his own. To Monroe's immediate predecessor these little vagaries which had excited comment, whether proceeding from the fervor of patriotism or from selfish motives, appeared light in the scale against the consideration that an opportunity had been given and seized for the prodigal's return. "The harmony of sentiment so extensively maintained," Madison rightly predicted, "will give strength to the administration at home, and command abroad additional respect for our country and its institutions." †

The White House, which had been rebuilt by Hoban, the Irish architect, after the original plan, which followed the Duke of Leinster's dwelling in Dublin as a model, was now, though unfinished, in a fit state to receive the new President, and Monroe gladly gave up his temporary lodgings at Washington for a mansion well built and spacious, which has since served as the permanent Executive abode, for not only social and domestic but likewise official purposes. ‡ To complete satisfactorily the list of leading appointments was Monroe's next care. The only cabinet names sent in to the Senate at its executive session in March had been those of John Quincy Adams for Secretary of State, Crawford for Secretary of the Treasury, and Governor Isaac Shelby, of Kentucky, for Secretary of War. These nominations had

* Monroe's Tour (Waldo); Washington Intelligencer, Sept. 1817.

† Monroe MSS.; Madison's Writings, August 22, 1817.

‡ In 1903 simple eastern and western wings were added for the Presidential convenience.

been promptly confirmed. But the aged Shelby declining office, some difficulty occurred in supplying his place. Monroe's first wish had been to bestow four cabinet appointments so as to honor equally the four great sections of the Union, east, middle, south, and west. Each part of the Union would thus be gratified, while the knowledge of local details and men thereby brought into the cabinet would be of practical utility. Such a course, however, was found to some extent impracticable. Clay, to whom Monroe offered the War Department soon after his election, refused it, as he had previously done a tender of the office from President Madison; and this time with petulance, for Clay was angry that Adams and not he had been selected for the portfolio of State, and the more conspicuous honor. The war office, in fact, ever since Monroe resigned the double duties of 1814, had been without a responsible head; for Madison left it in Crawford's temporary charge after the Senate rejected Dearborn, and since Monroe's accession the chief clerk had served *ad interim*. Unwilling to defer the choice of a Secretary longer, and finding Jackson disinclined to the office, Monroe turned from the west to South Carolina, two of whose sons, Lowndes and Calhoun, were of rising renown in Congress, and either would strengthen the administration; of these, Lowndes having declined, Calhoun was immediately appointed.* For Attorney-General, after a further canvass, which showed that the west had no competent candidate, William Wirt, of Virginia, was fixed upon. As Crowninshield of Massachusetts, Secretary of the Navy under the late administration, was not yet prepared to retire, no further vacancy in the cabinet occurred until about a year later, when, upon his resignation, Smith Thompson, chief justice of the Supreme Court of New York, and a man strongly

October.

Nov. 1818.

* In later years Crawford's friends sought to give the impression that Calhoun owed his appointment to Crawford's influence. This Monroe denied, though admitting that he might have consulted Crawford and others on the subject, none of whom offered any objection. Monroe MSS., 1827.

recommended to Monroe, though personally a stranger, was appointed.

While the great middle States were tardily represented in the cabinet, and the west not at all (for the Postmaster-General was not yet a cabinet adviser), other high appointments were made in the interest of those sections. Richard Rush, the late Attorney-General, who had remained at his post pending the selection of a successor, besides transacting the correspondence of the State Department through the summer, went as minister to London to succeed Adams on the arrival of the latter from abroad. Gallatin was retained, agreeably to his wish, in the French mission. As for Eustis, it had been understood that he should prolong his stay in Holland for negotiating jointly with Gallatin a commercial treaty. Pinkney was recalled from Russia in compliance with his own urgent request,* the mission to St. Petersburg calling at this time for little more than the judicious personal influence of some man of character; and still solicitous that the west should not go unrepresented, Monroe finally selected George W. Campbell, of Tennessee.† Meigs, of Ohio, too, remained Postmaster-General, dying during Monroe's second term.

The government patronage had not greatly grown under the Republican Presidents, nor did Monroe mean that it should serve for the aggrandizement of any one. Auditors and other bureau officers were usually advanced by promotion, and in the general service vacancies were not forced without good cause and deliberation. In exceptional instances, where there was a vacancy, the President took pleasure in helping some old friend in need; and one such instance occurred where Joshua Barney, of privateering fame, received an appointment at the Baltimore custom-house, on the death of a former incumbent, just as he had prepared to remove

* See 3 Madison's Writings; Monroe MSS. Pinkney wished to come home to attend to professional duties. "My desire," he wrote in a personal and very friendly letter to Monroe, "is to be a mere lawyer."

† For Campbell's brief career as Secretary of the Treasury in 1814, see vol. ii, 403, 416.

in his old age to Kentucky, broken in fortune.* But to needy kinsmen of his own, whose debts he had assumed to his impoverishment, Monroe would show no such favor.

Upon the principle to which, as we have seen, he now committed himself, Monroe made his chief appointments from among tried Republicans, save, indeed, so far as men like John Quincy Adams and Wirt might have been differently classed; and from none, at all events, who had been identified with the factious opposition to the late war. While in Boston, Monroe was pointedly warned by a Massachusetts man of conspicuous family, who disclaimed personal interest, that former Federal leaders were jealous of one another, that they craved power and distinction, and that of them all only Webster and Lloyd could be trusted.† He apprehended, too, that, notwithstanding the eastern people of all parties had now come over to him, they were still too much under the old and virulent political influences, and that only younger men, impressible with the national idea of the future, were fit to conduct them into new lines of policy and new combinations. Pre-eminently fit for that work was Webster, as the event proved; a growing giant of superb intellectual endowments, born to command. Though a conservative by temperament and a Federalist by training, his past record had not committed him to the acerbities of the late war; and present retirement serving him well for reflection and the accumulation of power, when he re-entered public life in the full panoply of manhood his section might trust him as an eloquent defender, and the whole people as a statesman whose ruling passion was the love of a national union.

Little, then, could it matter to a President like Monroe, except, perchance, for his posthumous fame at the hands of this ruling set and of children and grandchildren suckled in its animosities, that eminent New Englanders who had treated him on his journey so hospitably should have lost interest as the plans of his administration were disclosed.

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*See Life of Joshua Barney.

†Monroe MSS., 1817.

Indeed, of all who had taken part in the Hartford Convention, or were known to have sympathized with its aims, the urbane and talented Otis, foremost in inviting Monroe to the east, alone assumed in later life the hazard of a national career, nor he with much success in the old arena. Meantime the President's only serious difficulties were with rival chieftains of his own party, and more especially with Crawford and Clay, Republicans both, with a strong personal following, of whom, as we have seen, the one had just accepted and the other refused the honor of an Executive counsellor.

Crawford's course, which in the end undermined his health and wrecked his political hopes, was utterly indefensible. The clearer the light which is thrown upon the inner circles of Monroe's administration, the more despicable appears the duplicity and selfishness of a statesman who in his day had a troop of admirers, and might have left a great name except for that consuming passion to become President, which checked the growth of kindly consideration for others. Crawford had attached to himself, while Madison's Secretary on his return, a little Congressional band who, in 1816, pushed his nomination to the Presidency by the legislative caucus, heedless of Monroe's infinitely superior claims for the office, upon the assurance that the caucus candidate was sure to be chosen. Monroe, after his nomination and election, invited Crawford in the most magnanimous spirit to continue in office. Not content with accepting this offer and then trusting to an honorable service under the administration which trusted him for further advancement, the Secretary of the Treasury constantly prepared pitfalls for the new Executive; embittering, moreover, the rivalry of cabinet associates, equally emulous of the succession with himself but more scrupulous in seeking it. Men of such mettle as Adams, Calhoun, and Wirt might try the temper of the haughty Georgian, who had come earlier into the field, and could ill afford to wait; but whatever their strifes with one another, all these were true to their chief. Crawford, however, struck at the hand which fed him. No sooner, in fact, were his relations to

the incoming administration settled than he began to persuade himself that he had made a personal sacrifice and only remained in the cabinet for prudential and public reasons ; and to his friends he showed thus early that he was in neither a grateful nor a docile frame of mind.* We shall see in the course of this narrative that embarrassments arose, through the persistent efforts of Crawford's friends in Congress ; embarrassments traceable to the instigation of Crawford himself, who staked his chances first upon the probable errors of the new administration and his ambitious associates, and next upon securing a following in Congress strong enough to carry the next caucus nomination for himself. One of almost gigantic stature, portly, dignified in bearing and self-possessed, who knows how to accost others with an agreeable expression and yet speaks with decision, embodies to the popular imagination still, as in ancient times, the type of commander, king among men. Of this type was Crawford, a very Saul in appearance, who, though illiterate and unpolished, and of mental acquirements never in truth severely tasked, as to which contemporaries have widely differed, knew well, at all events, how to attach lesser men to his person and manage their votes. In aspect he certainly satisfied and more than satisfied the reputation of superior ability. Such is the faith of mankind, that one of physical perfection is not readily believed to lapse into the meaner vices of human nature, by those who always behold him in the safe perspective ; nevertheless, experience teaches that leaders of this class practice frequently the basest arts to destroy a rival, besides treacherously permit-

* See *e. g.*, in the published Gallatin correspondence several of Crawford's letters written in 1817. Crawford was the only American in public life with whom Gallatin, at this time and while abroad, kept up anything like a personal correspondence. John Quincy Adams's Diary makes the darker traits of Crawford's character, as displayed at this era, very prominent ; perhaps imputing bad motives too constantly. Calhoun doubtless wrote of Crawford as a bitter personal enemy. But in the main, the unfavorable estimate which Adams formed of Crawford is confirmed by all trustworthy testimony of this period, and most unquestionably, though with great forbearance, by the Monroe MSS.

ting him to destroy himself, their ambition being haughty, intolerant, and disposed to secrete a jealousy.

As to Clay the situation was quite different. He had pointedly refused to come into the new administration, and unless he betrayed constituencies and such of a political party as might still claim him for a leader, he was certainly free to shape his own career. That Clay was vexed at not having the first place in the cabinet offered to him cannot be doubted ; nor that his chagrin was increased when he knew that Adams, with whom he had so constantly bickered at Ghent, had received the portfolio of State instead.* It was early foreseen that in consequence Clay, though ranking hitherto among the friends of the new administration, would oppose it in Congress. A man of ardent ambition, Clay was, nevertheless, honorable in the main, lofty in general purpose, and sedulous of the public welfare. He had been a most useful statesman of late, both as legislator and diplomatist, helping the country out of the war with Great Britain as skillfully as he had led it in; and, in whatever service engaged, leaving the remarkable impression of courage, self-confidence, and fertility in resources. But a lively imagination sometimes captivated his judgment, and throwing the full radiance of his lantern forward, he would spring upon a new path without perceiving the obstacles which were closest. At this time his quick political instinct told Clay that the American people would leave the old parties and re-form on new issues. He darted forward to occupy those issues and become the standard bearer of the future. But he did not realize that this dissolution of old parties would be slow, very slow ; nor how gladly our citizens would welcome, meantime, the unwonted respite from political turbulence;

* All contemporary testimony is to this point, though no letter of Clay is extant which admits or denies the premises. See John Quincy Adams's Diary. See also Crawford's letters of 1817 in Gallatin's Works. Crawford hints at political reasons which restrained the President from appointing Clay to the State Department. He further alleges that Clay's ambition would not stop short of that office. He adds further that Russell and Crowninshield tried to prevent Adams's appointment.

he could not be convinced that Monroe had both the power and opportunity to repress the growth of new parties; and, blindly enough, he appears to have shared Crawford's belief that there would be a speedy schism among Monroe's supporters, followed by a new combination of the discordant elements, which, headed by a dissatisfied West, his own section and the section not represented in the cabinet, might, under good management, bring the new administration to the ground.*

Both Crawford and Clay were in a sense political gamesters. Clay played for popularity, or rather for that public gratitude of which official promotion is, or should be, the natural expression. He caught the omens of the future, and his ambition was of that generous sort which makes one eager to be first in promoting measures for the general good. Out of the ideas now floating in the public mind he gathered presently an American system or policy which he impressed upon the coming age with all the vigor of his eloquence and personality; so that, whatever his individual disappointments, and these were many, his name remains inseparable from the annals of his times. Crawford, on the other hand, is identified with nothing but his own ungratified aspirations, except it be as a steadier friend of the National Bank than most of the Southern Democracy. He fairly administered the Treasury upon the ideas of his predecessors; but as a statesman he originated nothing beyond the art of using a high office, with its patronage, as the stepping-stone to a higher. He trimmed upon principle for the sake of keeping himself available; and content to be President that he might rule and dispense favors, he sought promotion at the hands of a faction, strong enough within the party, as he believed, to control the choice. He studied the moods of Congress rather than of the people; and here he erred. His game was for himself; and though he played a bold hand he lost it, and in consequence is already forgotten.

* See Crawford's letters to Gallatin, 1817, in connection with the narrative of the present administration.

The fifteenth Congress assembled, like its predecessor, in the new building leased to the government for a temporary emergency.* Its first session lasted from December 1, 1817, to April 20, 1818; its second from November 16, 1818, to March 3, 1819. Time and rotation had produced remarkable changes in the composition of this body. Many who were influential Republicans in the House before the war, such as Eppes, of Virginia, and the upright but parsimonious Macon, now sat in the Senate; and here among Federalists curiosity singled out Harrison Gray Otis, lately chosen to succeed Gore; for Massachusetts, though reconciled to the Union, adhered to those who had supported her pride. Former party distinctions, however, were fast sinking into oblivion. Rufus King, chief of old school Federalists in the Senate and the latest candidate of that party for President, had already cultivated the friendship of the new administration. Dana, James Barbour, and Campbell were men of note in this branch. No longer a privy council or the sedate gathering of a few statesmen oppressed with the sense of superior dignity, the Senate was about to enter on its higher career of usefulness. Nor was the House as yet so large as to be incumbered by a ponderous parliamentary routine. Here Republicanism had made a nominal gain of about fifty-three over the majority of the preceding Congress. Among men of talent were the witty John Holmes, of the Maine district; Taylor, Tallmadge, and John C. Spencer, of New York; Hopkinson and Sergeant, of Pennsylvania; Louis McLane, of Delaware; the veteran Smith, of Maryland; Philip P. Barbour and Tyler, of Virginia; Lowndes, of South Carolina; and Forsyth, of Georgia. Among western representatives in this Congress, two heroes of the late war, William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, and Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, seemed at present inclined to follow Henry Clay into a sort of half opposition to Monroe's administration. Webster,

1817–1819.

* *Supra*, p. 3.

we may add, who had lately moved from his native State to Boston, where he won rapid renown at the bar, was for the present withdrawn from the national service.

Sickness and private embarrassments detained Vice-President Tompkins at New York much of the time, so that John Gaillard, of South Carolina, President of the Senate *pro tempore* under four successive administrations, and a gentlemen of the old school, universally respected for probity and moderation, was kept almost constantly employed in the active duties of the station which he had filled since the death of Gerry. For, under both Madison and Monroe, the office of Vice-President appears to have been held to most intents as a sinecure. In the House, Clay was elected Speaker, as before, and this time by a vote almost unanimous, his hostile attitude towards the new administration not being yet pronounced, though privately spoken of.

To appreciate rightly the work of this Congress, a rapid review of our foreign relations becomes needful. With England and the continent of Europe this Union was now in the main on peaceful though not intimate terms; and the success of our late war with Great Britain, followed, as it had been, by a speedy resumption of specie payments and the initiation of a system of national defence adequate for any future emergency, won the speedy respect of Powers whose own extrication from the toils of an exhausting conflict was of necessity slower. The task of the allied sovereigns was no easy one; each sought especial advantages, while mutual concessions alone could restore the real balance of power. The Bonapartes had fled. Exiled to the lonely and inaccessible rocks of St. Helena, with the broad ocean for his jailer, the fallen Emperor drooped rapidly in his remote prison, and death soon closed a wonderful career. Meantime his conquerors re-established royal supremacy in the shrunken domains of France; and by 1818 a Bourbon ruler opened the legislative session at fickle Paris, asserting his family claims amid shouts of

"*Vive le roi!*" After long and devastating wars with one another the nations of civilized Europe were now at peace.

Of the United States, the *London Times* had observed: "Their first war with England made them independent; their second made them formidable." And calling attention to America's large armies and victorious navy, that influential journal expressed the foreboding that Canada and the remaining British possessions would soon be absorbed by the advancing confederacy. This danger, if it existed, Great Britain averted by the adoption of a more liberal policy towards her remaining American possessions; but the ministry, while the fear lasted, turned strenuous efforts to the east, where in India, and perhaps China, the prospect of advancing English colonial and mercantile schemes promised a rich recompense for the eventual loss of northern America, should it occur.

One immediate result of the strong impression produced by our new republic abroad was perceived in the rapid influx of European population to these shores. In the Old World, debts, standing armies, and a political proscription threatened ruin, and the laborer went supperless to bed. But in the New all was hope and renewed energy, and citizens who had differed seemed happily reunited. Emigration to the United States was already so extensive as to attract the jealous attention of European powers. During the summer of 1817, foreign settlers, at an estimated rate of 1000 a week, arrived at American ports, among whom were men of the middle rank, refugees, and others, who had lost caste in the social re-adjustment consequent upon Napoleon's downfall; and, for a few weeks, at least, more came from France, Germany, and Switzerland than from either England or Ireland. Many emigrants came into the United States from Halifax or through the British provinces, hundreds crossing at the Canada line. These all sought an asylum and peaceful home in a land of liberty.†

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* London Times, April, 1817.

† 12 Niles's Reg. The London Times, potent in the diplomatic circles

Of all the European powers, Spain alone remained in vexatious relations with the United States, and our present diplomatic troubles had reference to two leading topics, —the negotiation for the cession of Florida to the United States, and revolution in the Spanish American colonies.

As for the Florida negotiation, no genuine progress had been made since Madison's retirement. It seemed as if Spain repaid our constant moderation and forbearance with disingenuous conduct. Ferdinand's hatred of free institutions was ill concealed after his restoration. A bigot by nature, harsh experience made him despotic in principle, though he bore the sceptre without the purse. Had England, Russia, or France supported his wishes, he would probably have defied the United States openly; but this proving hopeless, he was forced to profess conciliation. At the same time secret agents of the king fomented disturbance on the Florida borders, and poisoned the minds of our citizens in New Orleans. Cevallos, Ferdinand's chief officer of state, who was a slow worker, fell sick under a heavy burden of diplomatic cares, and negotiations with the United States had consequently been transferred, before Monroe's accession, from Madrid to Washington. Here Don Onis was the resident Spanish minister, and his instructions were evidently to keep the Florida negotiation suspended, so as to bring about neither rupture nor settlement. In this suspension our government concurred, hoping that Spain would finally accede to the joint arrangement we desired: namely, a full cession of the Floridas, East and West, to the United States, together with a re-arrangement of the boundary lines of the Louisiana ces-

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of Europe, still manifested a stubborn disbelief in American institutions. Admitting that American affairs were as yet inexpensively managed, it argued that when the United States became a thickly-settled nation a monarchy would be the form of government. This, apparently, was the general opinion in English circles of influence; but it was conceded, with a tone of increasing respect, that the United States, while seeming desirous of preserving amity with foreign powers, took all the necessary precautions against aggressions from without.

sion in dispute; and in return a final relinquishment on our part of spoliation claims against Spain, for which a former treaty, never carried into effect, made considerable provision. How such a conclusion was hastened by events transpiring at our southeastern borders, and particularly by Jackson's invasion of Florida in 1818, during the Seminole war, will presently appear.*

Revolution in the Spanish American colonies was a phenomenon of the times which bore witness, first to the rapid decline of Castilian influence in that new world which a Catholic line of monarchs had first appropriated as royal domain; next to the expanding force of the self-governing idea for which the United States stood as chief exponent and exemplar. Liberty, repulsed by legitimacy abroad, winged her way across the Atlantic. Once more had commenced the war between Spain and her American colonies which antedated the present century. The tyranny and extortion of viceroys, the cupidity of adventurers from Europe, sufferings endured under an unequal rule and in the course of wars from which they themselves could reap no benefit, swelled the long catalogue of grievances presented by these South American subjects to justify their revolt against the mother-country. In 1778 the ignorant Indians of Upper Peru sought, but unsuccessfully, to throw off the yoke of Spain. Tranquillity followed their failure until the opening of the nineteenth century; at which epoch, and in the midst of European war and commotions, many of the South American provinces found their secret longings for liberty fostered by the policy which Pitt or Napoleon might in turn elect to pursue, not from sympathy, but rather so as to cripple Spain, according as the lot of that country happened to be cast with the one opponent or the other. To the project of emancipating these Spanish provinces and laying their ports open to British commerce—for in British policy trade and philanthropy seek constantly the same market—we have al-

* President's Message, December, 1817; Diplomatic Correspondence; Monroe MSS.; Madison's Writings.

ready alluded in connection with that ill-fated Miranda enterprise which once so dazzled the mind of our Hamilton.* Spain's ill success in the European struggle at length gave the South Americans the longed-for opportunity, and by 1813–14 they had broken into rebellion, Buenos Ayres taking the lead. But the revolutionists were wary; for though mounting the republican cockade, hoisting an independent flag, and coining their own money, they issued decrees in the name of his Catholic Majesty. When Ferdinand VII. became restored to the Spanish throne, Buenos Ayres sent a deputation to Madrid acknowledging a conditional allegiance. But the haughty king refused to temporize; new popular outbreaks occurred; and on the 9th of July, 1816, the patriot Congress of Buenos Ayres formally declared the independence of the province. From that day the contest became one of contending armies, between invader and defender. Nor was the revolution confined to Buenos Ayres; for Paraguay and the eastern shore of the La Plata, regions hitherto governed by the Spanish commandant at Buenos Ayres, except for some portions held by Portugal, likewise revolted. Chili, too, formally declared an independence which, behind its mountain ramparts, had been virtually enjoyed for many years. The revolutionary spirit spread through Venezuela and the northern provinces of South America which had alternately refused and acknowledged European allegiance; and nowhere in the heart of the Andes or west of the valley of the Amazon was Spanish supremacy longer secure. Brazil, however, that vast eastern domain of South America, had, after various vicissitudes, accepted an hereditary empire in 1808 from Portugal, and was long contented.

While the missionary spirit of freedom could no longer be checked in this broad region, it was by no means certain that the revolting colonies would unite their fortunes, nor that, whether united or separate, their inhabitants were capable of that constancy and self-restraint, without which a genuine government of the people is impossible. In Buenos

* See vol. i, 411; vol. ii, 124.

Ayres, a State whose general intelligence and superior resources had kept it thus far at the head of the new movement, civilization was at a low ebb as compared with the United States. Cattle-raising and the kindred pursuits of agriculture engaged most of its inhabitants. In the interior country wealth purchased but few of the comforts of life; and here it was not uncommon to see the proprietor of a square league of land and several thousand head of cattle sheltered in some miserable hut, barely furnished, his yard enclosed by a few stakes bound with thongs, and his scanty furniture made of raw hide; and seated with his herdsmen by a fire in the open air, he would cut off slices of beef from a roasted carcass, fastened by a spit into the ground, and eat his meat without bread or salt.* Under stupid rulers and bigoted priests mental development throughout Spanish America had for centuries been repressed, and men and women were reared in the superstitions of the cradle and nursery. Factions, too, and the inequalities of social condition, must necessarily have interfered with anything like a solid and permanent establishment of republican order. To be tossed from one extreme to another, to feel alternately the persecution of revolutionists and reactionists, is to sicken the faint-hearted of liberty, and make stability and even despotism welcome.

To shake off Spanish domination, then, was comparatively easy; but self-conquest remained the difficult task. The discipline of freedom, indeed, is long and painful, while freedom's illusions make the soul chafe with impatience. No people can advance surely but by gradual steps, and the rarest of leaders in a revolutionary crisis is he who has both the courage and honor of this conviction.

At an early stage of the South American struggle, President Madison had decided to treat it as a civil war, in which the contestants might claim equal rights in our ports. This decision, the first pronounced by any civilized Power, but soon followed in Europe, was 1816.

* See J. R. Poinsett's Report, Nov. 1818.

not reached without an impartial consideration of all the circumstances, in accordance with the law of nations; and on the principle of strict neutrality, as established by Washington, all our public dealings with Spain and her revolting colonies had since been regulated. The public vessels of both belligerents had been received on the same footing; either might purchase and export articles not contraband; the commerce of the one was to be respected like that of the other. As always happens, however, at such a stage, the cold pursuance of international duty could not satisfy the passionate factions on either side. Spain complained, and not without reason, that vessels were fitted out in the United States to cruise under the insurgent flags against her commerce; and hence the act of 1816, in extension of our neutrality laws, which threatened fine, imprisonment, and a forfeiture of the vessel in such cases.*

Nevertheless, the sympathies of the American people were unquestionably with the South American patriots, their younger kinsmen in liberty's cause. This zeal was fed by the cupidity for privateering, which had broken out so strongly in Baltimore and other ports that Monroe on his accession found breaches of neutrality committed, which, upon the Spanish minister's remonstrance, were checked by legal prosecutions. Many wished the new administration to recognize at once the independence of the revolting provinces and give liberty a helping hand. Appreciating this wish, but at the same time desirous of ascertaining more positively what were the actual prospects and resources of the rebellious colonists before committing the United States to a change of attitude, which, under all circumstances of neutrality, should depend upon a *de facto* establishment of the independent government, Monroe sent three commissioners in a ship of war to coast among the ports of South America, gather information, and report. These commissioners, as finally selected, were Cæsar A. Rodney, Theodorick Bland, and John Graham. After va-

* Madison's Messages; Act March 3, 1816.

rious delays, chiefly by reason of sickness and death in Rodney's family, they departed on their mission about the date when Congress assembled. In sending this commission the Executive had acted on its own responsibility, not, however, without publicly announcing through the press the course thus determined upon.

A further reason for circumspection on the part of our government was afforded by the critical state of affairs in Spanish North America, and upon our own disputed borders. The green pasture lands of that vast triangle, included between the Rio Grande and Red Rivers and the Gulf of Mexico, which constituted the Spanish province of Texas, had, ere this, tempted lawless wanderers in our Mississippi region. Settlements were formed under the claim that Texas had been embraced in the Louisiana cession. During the war of 1812, a body of our citizens made a rash attempt to wrest the country from Spain, aided by malcontents in that province. The ill-assorted band was defeated near San Antonio by a force of Spanish regulars, despatched by the Captain-General, and the expedition miserably failed. Nevertheless, symptoms were now reviving of a disposition cherished on either side of the border line to procure, peaceably or by force, the severance of Texas from Spain; for the sake, it might be, of a permanent independence, or on the other hand so as to annex it to the United States. Mexico, furthermore, appeared inclined to throw off the Spanish yoke, to which end adventurers were plotting, among whom might be reckoned a few merchants at our leading seaports. One rumor brought by Onis to the notice of Secretary Adams in September, connected the name of Joseph Bonaparte with the enterprise, as one who might, in a favorable contingency, be called to the Mexican throne. But nothing came of that project, if, indeed, it was ever entertained at all; nor did Adams believe that Bonaparte himself was privy to such a plot.*

Indeed, what with Ferdinand's imbecile rage and the grow-

* John Quincy Adams's Diary, 1817; Monroe MSS.

ing popularity of the Spanish American revolution, a breed of irresponsible schemes was hatched in the hot sands of the Gulf of Mexico during the first summer of Monroe's administration. Among the heroes thus spawned at the Florida frontier was one Gregor McGregor, who brought down in 1817 a band of lawless recruits gathered from Charleston and Savannah to Amelia Island (a tract lying just outside the jurisdiction of the United States, at the mouth of the St. Mary's River, which to winter tourists of the present day is best known as the site of the genial town of Fernandina), and took possession in the name of the insurgent Spanish colonies of Buenos Ayres and Venezuela under the pretence of holding their public commission, at the same time proclaiming a blockade of St. Augustine. To him succeeded Aury, another notorious adventurer. The zeal of these pseudo-patriots in their favored retreat was chiefly confined to freebooting enterprises and smuggling slaves into the United States, not less in defiance of American than Spanish authority. Earlier in the year another nest of outlaws professing to be rebels was discovered at the remote seaport of Galveston, on the Texas coast, of whose piracies complaint was made by our customs authorities at New Orleans. To tolerate such a menace to the United States upon the plea that Spain, powerless as she was, ought to expel the marauders, was inadmissible. Both Amelia Island and Galveston were embraced in a domain to which we had at least an equitable claim and priority, and whose title we were at this time striving to perfect. And as for the impudent assumption that the intruders had been commissioned by revolutionary governments, that was most likely a falsehood; and so, indeed, it afterwards proved.* Prompt action averted all danger. Upon the advice of his cabinet, Monroe gave orders in October that those irregular establishments should be suppressed at once. Naval vessels sailed to execute these orders; and early in the new year the President announced that Amelia

October. 1818. Jan.

* See Monroe's second annual message, November, 1818.

Island and Galveston had been yielded up without bloodshed.*

How nearly extinct must have been Spanish authority in those domains bordering upon the Gulf which Ferdinand still claimed the right to dispose of at pleasure was seen in the fact that a buccaneering band of scarcely more than one hundred and fifty, thus easily dispersed by our navy, had held Amelia Island for months against a royal governor, who made but one effort, and that an utterly futile one, to dislodge them. The Seminole War, as we shall soon see, tore rudely away whatever veil of illusion might still have remained. In truth, the only pretence of Spanish occupation of the Floridas at all consisted at this time in the retention of small garrisons at Pensacola and St. Augustine. That under such circumstances the United States forces should have kept temporary possession of the ports surrendered was natural ; nor was otherwise the lawless, piratical spirit engendered by a continual revolution likely to be overawed ; nevertheless, Spain received positive assurance that her claims would be respected in territory which our arms had rescued from those who had first wrested it from her own grasp.

Secret acts empowering the Executive, in an emergency, to take possession of East and West Florida had been passed by Congress in 1811 and 1813. The course of the Executive in the affair of Amelia Island and Galveston being based upon that legislation, these secret acts were for the first time produced from the archives of State and officially published.†

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* See 4 Adams's Diary ; Monroe MSS. ; President's Message of January 13, 1818, with documents.

† Acts, January 15, 1811; March 3, 1811; February 12, 1813; 3 U. S. Statutes at Large, 471. And see *supra*, vol. ii, p. 390.

It appears that Spain protested at first so strenuously against the occupation of Amelia Island that during January, 1818, the whole subject was carefully reconsidered in our Cabinet. There was some fear of a war with Spain and other powers, should this occupation continue. Adams and Calhoun urged, however, that the government should stand firm, other advisers wavering. The President concluded to retain possession for the present, and not withdraw our troops. See John Quincy Adams's Diary.

Such, then, being the policy of the new administration with reference to Spain and her revolting colonies, it remained for the Fifteenth Congress to approve or disapprove of proceedings which had necessarily anticipated its assembling. Monroe, like Washington, had moved deliberately in the path of a just neutrality, making the question, as far as possible, one of Executive conscience. But popular sympathy strongly favored the cause of the Spanish patriots, as was natural, while zealots and fortune-hunters could be satisfied with nothing short of a prompt recognition of colonial independence, regardless of international duty and of the foreign embroilment which was sure to ensue, should a false step be taken by us.

1817–18.

The Spanish revolution promised already to be the master problem of the new administration. Nor did the South American patriots refrain from drawing our government as far as possible into their contest. In this they were supported by a party among ourselves, only too ready to make an impression unfavorable to the administration. Scarcely had the President's message been read before the disappointed Speaker and his Western friends were on their feet, asking documents and making calls for papers, as though to convict the administration of callousness towards the struggling republics, whom they themselves were bound to protect. While a bill for enforcing neutral discipline was under discussion, Clay announced on the floor that he should in the course of the session bring the cause of the South American patriots before the House in a manner worthy of the subject. "I shall on that occasion," he added, "redeem them from the calumnious reproaches of ignorance, superstition, and unfitness for self-government which are made against them."

1818. Feb. 28.

The diplomatic appropriation bill coming up for action not long after, Clay objected to inserting an item of $30,000 for defraying the expenses of the investigating commission sent by Monroe to South America. He wanted information; for these men had not

1818. March 24–28.

been regularly appointed to or confirmed by the Senate. A letter from the Secretary of State showed how long the commissioners expected to be absent, what were their intentions, and what the rate of compensation fixed upon for each. They had no distinct diplomatic rank; but as they were not secretly selected, the public knew well, through the newspapers, all the essential facts of their mission. Clay still objected. Men travelling in this way were not, he thought, likely to obtain correct information; some one silent and observing ought to have been sent instead, with the object of his mission concealed; and, moreover, there remained the constitutional objection that the President had appointed three persons without submitting their names to the Senate, and without even using for their remuneration the contingent fund confided to him. To this Forsyth, of Georgia, responded, on behalf of the Executive, that an American agent, if sent secretly, might have been thrown into prison; and as for using the contingent fund, was it not more honorable in the President to ask Congress for an appropriation than pay these commissioners from the secret service money? Lowndes having withdrawn the item at issue, in order to obtain further information, Clay at once moved an appropriation of $18,000 for the outfit of a regular minister from the United States to Buenos Ayres; and in that mingled strain of passionate appeal and invective in which he surpassed all his American contemporaries, he pressed boldly for a formal recognition of Spanish American independence, at the same time charging the Executive, in censorious terms, with a lack of energy in pressing a settlement with Spain. A long debate followed, Forsyth vigorously defending the administration, after which the House, by a large vote, rejected Clay's motion.* The $30,000 asked for the South American commissioners was granted; but to obviate the admission of a precedent for paying persons unofficially appointed by a specific appropriation, it was agreed that

* For the speeches of Clay and Forsyth, see 14 Niles's Reg. 121, 136; also Annals of Congress.

this sum should be allowed in the shape of a contingent fund. A new act in aid of prosecutions for breach of neutrality was also passed at this session.*

As chief supporter of the administration in these Spanish American debates, John Forsyth won much distinction. Though a young man, he had already served four years in the House.† A member of the Georgia delegation, and prominent still earlier at the bar of that State, he was, nevertheless, like Clay, Virginia born. At this period of his life a handsome face and figure finely set off superior talents and deepened the impression produced by his oratory. He was a man of agreeable manners, whose marriage into an influential family enhanced his social importance. But with all these advantages, Forsyth rose unsteadily and slowly, for, together with indolence, a certain instability of character operated against him. He was ambitious, but his ambition was not of the lofty kind which makes one far-reaching in vision. Late in life he became a good cabinet adviser of Jackson; not, however, without having meanwhile experienced much political vicissitude, becoming at one time a busy adversary, and even a meddlesome one, under the crafty Crawford's influence. During the period we now describe he was advanced, first by the Georgia legislature to the Senate, and next by the President to the Spanish mission; so that his present passage of arms with Clay was brief, as well as his service in the House Committee on Foreign Relations, which sustained the Executive in its chosen course. In originality, rapidity of thought, profound depth of feeling, fervor of utterance, perseverance,—all those elements, in fact, by which personal character forces its way, not to add, at the present time, public experience, Clay was immeasurably Forsyth's superior. Indeed, with a good cause and generous motives for espousing it, Clay must have been irresistible. So impetuous was the torrent of his eloquence, rich in illustration

* Act April 20, 1818.
† Vol. ii, p. 378.

and apt in allusion; so readily did he seem to grasp the strong points of the cause he presented, pleasing and surprising his hearers by the remote analogies which a delicate intuition detected; so strongly would he put forth the results of an investigation which bore no trace either of lapse or laborious study; and above all, such was his fervid appeal as a fellow-man to humanity, to the pride or the shame, not of collective listeners alone, but of each individual among them who dared to doubt,—that he seemed to storm at the door of the heart while making a feint of convincing the intellect. It was thus that, though miscalculating the consequences, he had in 1812 nerved the country to plunge into war with Great Britain, and in 1813 to continue the conflict for sailors' rights. The vivid personification of the cause he pleaded: the wanderer, the prisoner, the outcast, the persecuted sufferer, or, on the other hand, that cowardly auditor whom he defied to go home and confess to his constitutents his own baseness,—by such portraiture he enforced his lesson. In such impassioned flights Clay seemed to soar in the pure ether, forgetful, like the eagle, of meaner motives that might have given his smoothly-spread wings their first flapping impulse thither. Clay's oratory, which has already passed into tradition, so inseparable were the matter and manner of his speeches, borrowed little from grace of gesture or the arts of rhetoric. He was tall and spare, not very muscular, and when in repose his countenance too often indicated dissipation as well as genius. When crossed in his wishes, or slighted, as on the present occasion, he showed himself haughty and exasperating; if indulged far, he became overbearing; but his disposition was generous, and his temper by no means implacable. His friendly approach would dispel personal enmity and soften prejudice, one of its familiar accompaniments being the offer or acceptance of a pinch of snuff, which he enjoyed after the custom of the times. Without special features to attract, Clay's whole aspect was engaging, while he conversed agreeably. But when he spoke the impression conveyed was immeasurably greater. Not flu-

ent or rapid in utterance at first, he gained in fire and energy of expression as his speech went on; a slight awkwardness of gesture which might mar the effect, until speaker and listener had warmed into sympathy, ceased to be perceptible. Clay's eye beamed, his face brightened, all the movements of his figure showed that he was earnestly engrossed with his subject, and when at length he sat down the legislative chamber reverberated with the accents of a most melodious voice.

Not all who voted against Clay in these Spanish American debates tended, as did the administration, favorably to the patriots, but with becoming prudence. Some, like the constituents they represented, distrusted the capacity of the revolutionists for self-government.

Clay's "rancorously benevolent stand" of opposition (as John Quincy Adams grimly but not unfitly characterized it in his Diary) was taken in the present Congress from the first day of the session, though of his good will to the patriots he had given earlier proofs.* The administration had already been apprised that, like John Randolph in 1806, this disappointed man would seek to control or overthrow the Executive by swaying the House, which trusted to his lead. To guide foreign affairs to the discomfiture of the rival preferred to himself in the State Department was Clay's main object. In private company he was still more censorious of the administration than in public, blaming the President for taking Amelia Island, as well as for failing to recognize the struggling South American republics at once. Crawford records that he was curt in debate at this session, and treated scarcely any of his fellow-members decently. Upon the Speaker's defection Monroe restrained all personal

* See Debates, January, 1817, in the Fourteenth Congress; Colton's Clay. Clay and Randolph had engaged in controversy upon the South American question, the latter professing indifference for a people who had done nothing for us in our distress, and even calling in question their capacity for liberty. Clay's response was earnest. "I wish them independence," he said; "it is the first step towards improving their condition. At any rate, let them have independence. Yes, from the inmost recesses of my soul, I wish them independence."

comment, though pained almost to sickness by it. "There might have been," he observed to his Secretary of State, after the motion to send a minister to Buenos Ayres had failed in the House, "perfect harmony if Clay had taken the ground that the Executive had gone as far as could be done with propriety in acknowledging the South Americas, and was well disposed to go further if such were the feeling of the nation and of Congress ; and if he had made his motion with that view, to ascertain the real sentiments of Congress. But between such a course and the angry, acrimonious one he pursued, there is a wide difference."*

To pass from foreign to domestic concerns. The President's opening message reproduced the buoyant spirit of his northern tour. He congratulated Congress upon the prosperous and happy condition of a country, where local jealousies were rapidly yielding to more generous, enlarged, and enlightened views of national policy.† 1817. Dec.

Nothing, surely, could be more gratifying than the state of our national finances as now exhibited. The public debt, most of whose aggregate represented the cost of our second struggle for independence, had already been funded. Swollen in four years from $45,000,000 to $127,000,000 and upwards, its reduction had commenced in 1816, so that by January, 1818, less than $103,500,000 were outstanding. Crawford's report showed a superabundant revenue, with rising receipts from the customs, while sales of the public lands had increased with an unparalleled rapidity. The public stocks were now above par. For the year 1817 $6,000,000 would remain after paying the interest and extinguishing more than $18,000,000 of the principal of the debt, together with current civil, military, and naval expenses of the government, inclusive of suitable provision for

* See John Q. Adams's Diary, December, 1817–March, 1818; Gallatin's Correspondence.

† President's Message, Dec. 1817, and accompanying documents ; Tables in American Almanac.

fortifications and for the gradual increase of the navy. The annual excess of revenue beyond current and permanent expenditures would, after the year 1819, probably be more than $4,000,000. These were the Treasury figures, and the Secretary of the Treasury himself confided in them.* To him it seemed as if Jefferson's vision of 1807 were speedily to be realized ; so that, should we keep clear of a war with Spain, we would soon have to find out new objects of national expenditure.† Recent messages from the Governors of various States exhibited a corresponding condition of financial prosperity. Where now, might America ask, was the European nation, relieved of war, whose current expenditures were surpassed by the receipts?

In consequence of the estimated surplus, and a Treasury report so favorable beyond expectation, Congress, by the first act of the session, repealed the internal taxes.‡ This accorded with the Executive recommendation; with the Jeffersonian policy, moreover, of lopping off needless offices and dispensing with a national excise. By a later act provision was further made for winding up the business of direct taxation, which, as a national system, had proved a constant incubus to the freeholder while it lasted.§

These repeals greatly increased the popularity of the new administration for the moment. The sequel proved, however, that such a reduction of the revenue was somewhat premature, and founded to some extent upon delusive appearances. The present season, to be sure, abounded in blessings ; good crops, well disposed of, made good trade, and the renewed energy and activity of our reunited people gave assurance of future prosperity. But the ravages of war burrow deeply. The country had been drained of specie circulation by many a hidden channel. Resumption had already been formally proclaimed, the new United States

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* Ib.

† Crawford to Madison and Gallatin ; 3 Madison's Writings ; 2 Gallatin's Works ; Monroe MSS.

‡ Act Dec. 23, 1817.

§ Act April 20, 1818.

bank with its branches aiding trade in the effort to equalize inland exchanges and regain a sound footing.* Nevertheless, except for the coin collected and kept in the sounder banks, no considerable amount remained in the United States at the close of the war. Since the resumption of specie payments in New York city, the issue of cash had been chiefly in small money, fractions of a dollar, and in gold ; none of which returned to the banks, because the public needed it for ordinary business. The middle, southern, and western States were inundated with bank paper, which flowed sluggishly, at depreciated rates ranging from 50 to 75 per cent. ; and a novel class of speculators, familiarly known as note-shavers, thrived in consequence. At this date notes of the New England, New York city, Philadelphia, and Baltimore banks stood at about par ; but most other bank-paper circulated at a discount, often very great. For foreign commerce Spanish dollars and foreign gold were in constant demand ; not so, however, our federal money, an inequality which the United States mint had lately been laboring to relieve. Notwithstanding a good disposition on the part of the strong banks in all sections of the country, the practical difficulties in the way of re-establishing our circulation fully and permanently on a sound specie basis were confessedly very great.†

American commerce afforded now but little profit. The halcyon days of double commissions from nations which fought while we carried for them were over. Headway for our flag became necessarily difficult against so many European competitors, each calculating closely how to make the most of its own peculiar advantages. Close trade was at length the established maritime policy of Europe, consequently of America.‡ But under the sanction of the Fourteenth Congress the United States government had offered,

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* *Supra*, vol. ii, pp. 446-450.

† See 13 Niles's Reg.; Rufus King's Letter to Monroe, April, 1817, in Monroe MSS.; newspapers of the day.

‡ Vol. ii, p. 456.

since 1815, a repeal of its own discriminating duties upon the conveyance of manufactures and productions to any foreign nation which would accord a like favor in return.* Such a principle of reciprocity the convention of London applied to the commerce between ports of the United States and British ports in Europe; † the new convention with the Netherlands, negotiated in 1817 by Eustis and Gallatin, likewise admitted it to some extent; ‡ and Monroe continued to press the policy in other quarters. Our export trade comprehended products of prime necessity, also rude materials which were in demand for foreign manufactures and so bulky as to give occupation to many vessels. The effort, therefore, was to place American commerce upon a basis which it was thought would carry its own commendation abroad; so that any nation might bring its own manufactures and productions into our ports and take back our manufactures and productions to their ports on equal and corresponding conditions of favor. Nevertheless, in the end the experiment of offering the reciprocal repeal of discriminating duties proved only partially successful. Sweden, Prussia, and some of the German States acceded to our offer, following the example of the Netherlands. France, however, and most other first-class Powers held back; while as to Great Britain, which persistently refused to admit our vessels to the West Indies on such terms, the present Congress retaliated by a corresponding exclusion of British colonial vessels, which, to the vexation of our merchants, Castlereagh accepted in perfect good humor.§

The American farmer and planter were heedful of their own interest in this state of affairs; nor did the local agricultural societies fail to consider what opportunities might be offered for improving the breed of American cattle, encouraging sheep-raising and the shearing of wool, and, among other new experiments, cultivating the vine and

* See Act March 3, 1815.
† See vol. ii, p. 438.
‡ See Act April 20, 1818, which was passed in consequence.
§ Act April 18, 1818.

olive. Agriculture constituted then, as always,* the basis of American industry; and something, it was thought, might be added to the staples already exported, or, at all events, for consumption at home.†

For American manufactures the dawn of a new era now dappled the sky. Hitherto protection as an incident had always been conceded in our tariff acts; but henceforth protection was to be agitated as a distinct national object, bearing its long train of import restrictions. Under the banner of the "American system" new political elements were soon to unite with Clay for a leader; but the seed of that system had been sown by Hamilton, whose long-forgotten report of 1790 was now reprinted and studied. The war of 1812, as the reader doubtless remembers, by shutting out European goods, stimulated at once our manufactures of cotton and woollen for home consumption, an interest to which American capital turned for profit, as agriculture and commerce for the time declined.‡ The development of this enterprise was not confined to the Middle States; for New England had also by 1816 turned with so much energy into this new channel of profit, favored by the thrift and inventive energy of her sons, as presently to aid in revolutionizing the national politics of that entire section. Before the war the Eastern States had fought Republican administrations stubbornly for the privilege of making their own terms and running

* Until quite recently (1903).

† Newspapers of the day furnish the occasional speeches of ex-President Madison, Governor De Witt Clinton, and others of national reputation, on such topics.

‡ See *supra*, vol. ii, p. 450. During 1815–17 an immense capital was thus employed, particularly in making goods of the coarser kinds. See Jeff. Works, Oct. 1814; Congressional Reports, Feb. 1816; 9 Niles's Reg. In 1816 the manufacturers of cotton represented an approximate invested capital of $40,000,000, employing 100,000 persons, mostly boys and females, and consuming annually 27,000,000 pounds of cotton. The woollen manufacturers claimed to have an invested capital of $12,000,000, employing 50,000 operatives and consuming raw material worth $7,000,000. Treasury Report, Feb. 1816; 6 Hildreth, p. 586.

their own risks with foreign nations in order to keep the carrying trade; but now the rising ambition, here as elsewhere, was to give the home market to the native manufacturer by taxing all imported goods of the same description. This country afforded a vast market for cheap and coarse fabrics; and why should not the farmer or mechanic who now wore American boots and an American hat, and worked with American tools, be made to supply his family and household with cotton shirts and sheeting, and outer garments too, of native production? Modern costly machinery was now expelling the old hand-looms and spinning-wheels; so that one feature of this industrial development consisted in crushing out by aggregated capital what had formerly been a household occupation; the hundred-handed automatic workman with busy and productive iron fingers superseding human labor; and in this resistless competition should foreign mill-owners be permitted to put our citizens out of employment and absorb the profits of honest toil?

The first impulse of Congress after war ended had been to reduce the high duties on imported goods to a national peace standard. Fixing 25 per cent. as the immediate rate on both woollens and cottons, the legislature determined that after three years this rate should be lowered to 20 per cent.* But this concession of delay seemed to our manufacturers quite inadequate. Millions of capital were at stake, and ruin impended unless this young industry received positive encouragement. Already were American mills struggling against a heavy stock of imported fabrics—those chiefly of British merchants—whose European trade in cotton and woollen goods had become much circumscribed. While civilized nations agreed in protecting their several interests against external competition, and England herself so remorselessly excluded the American people from the benefits of an equal interchange, preferring British ships and British goods, inviting skilled

1816.

* *Supra*, vol. ii, p. 450; Act April 27, 1816.

artisans to her shores and keeping them there, why should we give up to foreigners the only market subject to our own control?

The first organized national effort among our manufacturers for the protection of their industries dates, then, properly speaking, at Monroe's accession; 1817-18. the rising cotton and woollen interests supplying a vast motive power. An "American Society for the encouragement of American Manufactures" was formed at this period under the special auspices of New York capitalists, with the idea apparently of operating upon Congress, besides diffusing information and cultivating a public sentiment favorable to the national policy of protection. Of this society Vice-President Tompkins was chosen President, and John Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe were all elected members. The friendly letters thus elicited from all the surviving chief magistrates of the nation, past and present, were afterwards published.* Various local protection societies were established in different States, and a memorial to Congress prayed, among other favors, that the duties imposed by the tariff acts be made permanent.

It was as yet too early to put forward the tariff as a political issue. This was the season of education on economical problems. But the American Society and its friends reaped at once the advantage of a temporary resentment cherished against Great Britain because of her persistent restrictions upon American commerce; and during the period of the present Congress the duties on various imported articles were increased, while the proposed reduction on woollens and cottons under the Act of 1816 was further postponed so as to keep up existing duties until 1826.†

* Niles's Reg. 1817. Adams, Jefferson, and Madison all accepted membership in this society, and their letters express sympathy with its objects. The history of the last twenty years (writes the aged Jefferson) has been a sufficient lesson for us all to depend for necessaries on ourselves alone; and it is to be hoped that twenty years more will place the American hemisphere under a system of its own essentially peaceful and industrious, and not needing to extract its comforts from the Old World.

† See Acts April 20, 1818.

The great Republican party which Jefferson founded now hastened to a dissolution, having fulfilled its important mission: first, by educating the American people to trust their own virtue and capacity, and next by inducing them to strike boldly away the last links which bound us in colonial subservience to Europe and European methods. There could be no longer a doubt that this latest but not last of great republics would stand long enough to afford an illustrious and imperishable example to the human race; that, undismayed by ill forebodings or the sad experience of ancient times, the New World would pursue a career of its own, founding a continental empire upon self-discipline, and, if successful through centuries, remodelling at length the institutions of society in the parent hemisphere on the basis of universal brotherhood.

1817-18.

In the course of the late war this Republican party had become the party of the Union; it had absorbed the best blood of Federalism, and with it all that was best worth preserving of the old Federal creed, and more especially that practical reliance upon strong armies and navies in this degenerate age, as an indispensable means of securing respect abroad for the American flag. Consistency is the crown jewel of no political party which maintains its supremacy; for practical experience modifies many a theory, while to dominate must needs involve the application of all political maxims to the existing and changeful state of circumstances. There may be one rule for profound peace and another for impending war, one where we dictate events, another where events are forced upon us. Nevertheless, though forsaking some of the tame and frugal maxims of the pacific Jefferson's philosophy, under pressure of the most deadly conflict known to the civilized world since the battle of Actium, our later political leaders sought constantly the counsel of their venerated party chieftain; and youthful in heart through long years of retirement, though distressed by sad reverses of private fortune, Jefferson lived long enough to see his party accomplish its task and dis-

solve, and his enthusiastic faith was its nobler inspiration to the last. To him it seemed that the larger the extent of country the more firm would be its republican structure, if founded not on conquest but in principles of compact and equality; and cherishing the confidence that this Union would grow and expand for ages to come, his life-long theory was that, at all events, if we are to dream, the flatteries of hope are preferable to the gloom of despair.

Of late years there had been an ardent element perceptible in our politics, smothered, perhaps, and smouldering, so long as talents, education, and property still clearly kept the mastery. Smoke issued from the flanks of the rumbling earth, and down in some yawning fissure glowed the red embers. These were the eruptions of the fierce but nearly suffocated democracy, jealous and emulous of rule, but always repressed, or at least restrained from mischief, by the common sense of the cheerful majority. When that democracy rose to the surface, as it would some day, the republic would be consumed, and liberty would perish, so the sages prophesied then, as they have prophesied since. In other words, the elevation of democracy in the scale of national influence, and the depression correspondingly of the superior classes, was the abiding dread of the timid and conservative of the day. To this democracy flocked, as by a natural instinct, the poor, down-trodden, and degraded of other lands, who sought in America an asylum; social outcasts, men who in heart hated their monarchs, who had pulled off the cap to a lord or a count with a muttered curse, who knew what it was to sweat that others, born to luxury, might be pampered in idleness. Such men, if not stupid or besotted, brought to the experiment of popular government a rooted antipathy to that external authority from which they wished an escape; and forced still to toil with their hands for the necessaries of life, and dragged down by a thousand discouragements which those of happier circumstances can rarely comprehend, they envied more than they loved, because none could envy them. To all such turbulent spirits this republic offered relief, by placing the best opportunities of

wealth within their reach; by inculcating the spirit of universal brotherhood; by lowering the social barriers so as to let in the worthy and industrious; and, lest the new-comer might himself prove hardened and intractable, by taking his children in hand, if possible, and moulding them into happy and tractable citizens. By these means, not less than by the sterner discipline of the law, the government founded in common consent would stand strong. And yet, the spirit of the envious democracy cannot be altogether quenched in a republic while men remain emulous of distinction, and the pursuit of happiness leaves some happier than others. The Irish immigrants, herded together in some mean tenement, cast their votes against the landlord interest; the workman leaving home with his tin pail at sunrise recorded, if he dared, a silent protest against the mill-owners whom he served. It might not be fair for the laborer to turn upon his employer. The interests of labor and capital were indeed identical in a just sense, and ought to remain united. But though capital might intimidate labor, it could scarcely hope to persuade, while one was master and the other servant, while one enjoyed and the other was stinted.

Wherever, then, great social inequalities exist, there must be a class which staggers under harsh burdens of life that cannot be lifted, and knows little of its pleasures. That class, under a political system like ours, constitutes the fierce democracy, or, under its harshest aspect, the mob, the commune; and let these protest, let them vote as they choose, the first step is taken towards making them contented citizens. More conservative by temperament, more respectful to superiors, more in harmony with well-ordered systems of government, less ignorant, less violent, better qualified to rise superior to early disadvantages and achieve wealth and position, is the native citizen of Anglo-Saxon blood. It is the fickle and excitable immigrant who falls more readily into the class we describe, for the hand of oppression has moulded habits and character so that adaptation to free institutions becomes difficult, almost hopeless; and without hope one curses the happy. Opportunity to rise dissolves individual

membership in this class, and keeps jealousy from compacting mischief. As between the two old parties, Federalist and Republican, the latter had doubtless most befriended this class, and commanded its sympathy. It was Jefferson's party which called upon those in the humbler walks to participate, while Hamilton's bade them submit. It was the former which had welcomed foreign toilers to these shores, while the other sought not only to repress, but to banish him. The excesses of the French revolution, nevertheless, made the name of "Democrat" long obnoxious to Anglo-Americans. Washington himself put a stigma upon it. Nor, as we have shown, had Jefferson himself, but Jefferson's enemies, applied the epithet to that well-organized force which carried the Presidency in 1800, and had held it ever since; their object being to excite prejudice, his to allay it. Fifteen years, however, had produced a change. The Republican party, as a national body, now embraced both democratic and conservative elements, and one might have heard since Jefferson's retirement not only of "Republican" or "old school" men, but of "Democratic Republicans:" nay, even of those who gloried in the name of Democrat. The "Federalist party" as such existed no longer, but conservatives of a British patrician cast, who took pride in Federal antecedents, were to be found in the political ranks; these not unfrequently holding the balance of power amid the vulgar quarrels to which factious republicans of democratic stripe descended, more especially in the Middle States, where incongruous elements, native and foreign, were brought together. Federalism was allied at the Eastward with judges, college professors, scions of the old families, rich merchants, and the other elements locally dominant in its homogeneous society. By way of allusion to the past, or for convenient discrimination, newspapers would sometimes employ still the old party names; but the word "Federalist" had ere this passed into our popular speech as the odious synonyme of "Tory," "Hartford Conventionist," or "Blue-Light man;" and most who had once been proud of the name wished it dropped.

Monroe's tour, as we have seen, served to obliterate these old party distinctions, so that for a time even the rising "Democrat" was forgotten. To national issues succeeded State or local ones, scarcely a basis being afforded for consolidating political differences. To say that the old parties amalgamated at this era would be inaccurate: it was rather that they now disbanded, permitting those in the ranks to turn to private concerns. They who lived by politics, however, still warred as they might for its patronage. In Pennsylvania, for instance, raged a bitter conflict of factions, with little or no intelligent principle of division; the office-holders arranged on one side, the Aurora and Leib democracy on the other. William Findlay, the late Treasurer of the State, was nominated for Governor by the former set, Joseph Heister by the latter. The canvass was very scurrilous, but Findlay, with the aid of the Federalists, prevailed by a small majority. Simon Snyder, who now retired from the Executive office, as no longer eligible, had made a most popular chief magistrate.

1817. Oct.

There was, however, one issue presented in this Pennsylvania election, which indicated that voters were tiring of the old system which deputed to a legislative caucus of a party the selection, and in consequence the virtual choice of candidates. Economically as such machinery might operate, it was subject to sinister and subtle influences at the seat of government, peculiarly hostile to executive independence, nor did it register the latest preferences of a constituency, corrective, as might be, of legislative errors. An impending change, therefore, in our politics was the supersedure of the caucus by the convention; for party nominations, with more popular freedom on the one hand, but more lavish expenditure on the other; with less subserviency, perhaps, to a knot of chieftains, but more to those who stood ready to contribute towards the campaign expenses. The Harrisburg caucus which nominated Findlay had so far modified the old system as to admit delegates from counties represented by the Federalists, in ad-

dition to the Republican members; while Heister's selection was by a rival and fresh convention composed entirely of county delegates, specially chosen, which met at Carlisle.

As for New York State, a change still earlier in the nominating caucus, similar to that we have just described, had a few months earlier brought the mercurial De Witt Clinton back to power. That remarkable man, of strong prejudices and lofty pride, firmly attached to his supporters, but a bitter hater of all opponents, who seemed so absorbed by the passion for official station as to disdain wealth or his own scholarly gifts, save as they might promote his public influence, and who hewed his way among rivals as with a battle-axe, having, as he would affirm, no taste for Quakerism in politics, had taken a new and daring step, which made him the benefactor of his native State, and gave him, as its Governor, a nineteenth century fame, worthy of his distinguished family antecedents. Remitted somewhat rudely to private life upon the failure of his intrigue to supplant Madison in 1812 by a coalition of peace and war men,* Clinton devoted his enforced leisure to maturing a new scheme of internal highways, with the idea of bringing the produce of the great lakes, on the northwestern border, directly and cheaply, to New York harbor; which project he advocated so powerfully against the sceptical, as first to enlist the zeal of his fellow-citizens, and next to interest the legislature. Identified thus with a measure which in that day seemed stupendous, and yet appealed forcibly to the rising spirit for material development, Clinton was brought forward for Governor, after the war, under auspices which gave him a strong popular support, irrespective of party affiliations, and diverted the earlier odium from his name. After Tompkins retired from that office in order to enter upon the Vice-Presidency, the State legislature ordered a new election. There was still a disaffection between Clinton's friends and those of the late war governor; but Clinton,

1817. April.

1816.

* See vol. ii, p. 369.

having cultivated the President elect, and patched up his old feuds at home, obtained the regular Republican nomination, carrying the polls afterwards by general consent.

1817. April. Henceforth for many years one finds the voters of New York State classed as Clintonians and anti-Clintonians. The uncompromising Governor found a crafty and persevering foe in Martin Van Buren, the most consummate political tactician of the day, as events proved ; who,

1818. having, at the head of the Tammany forces, unsuccessfully opposed Clinton's first nomination, proceeded to set on foot a new organization of the State democracy, which presently became formidable.*

Clinton, however, used his present advantage as Chief Executive to push forward with promptness and vigor the work of internal improvement to which he had pledged him-

1817. self. The legislature, in April, 1817, had already authorized the immediate commencement of the Erie and Champlain canals. For the former, or "great canal," ground was broken July 4th near Rome. The work thus auspiciously commenced progressed with rapidity, to the amazement of those who had at first derided the project. Canals have long served the world for irrigation and conveyance, the latter purpose more especially since the modern invention of the lock ; but the importance of the Erie canal in our civilization is not confined to the comparison of its enormous length, 363 miles, or the expense, or the height, some 600 feet, to be surmounted, with that of similar works in the Old World. Until the later era of steam railways the stupendous wonder of America and a marvel of engineering, it solved for the first time the problem of cheap and extensive internal traffic between points inaccessible to sailing craft or steamboat. Its completion in 1825 raised the status of our modern enterprise, and gave the first grand impulse to an inland carrying trade, whose arteries now interlace the continent. It brought towns to the rivers that rivers might make them neighbors of the sea ; it conducted

* See newspapers of the day ; Clinton's confidential correspondence in 50 Harper's Monthly, 409, 563.

the produce of the great West to the Atlantic through the Hudson by a course which enriched the whole Empire State, studded its bosom with prosperous inland towns, and enabled the metropolis of New York to outstrip Philadelphia and all other rivals, so as presently to become the grand commercial emporium of America.

In conservative Massachusetts, where appeals to State infallibility and to the religious foundation of the Puritans found always a popular response, the prudent management of the old social leaders stood them in good stead. Meeting the new administration half-way, they basked in its popularity, reaping the full reward of their timely complaisance ; for nothing charms like the unbending of the rigid. That mild Federalist, Brooks, was re-elected Governor in 1817 and 1818, and for many years longer, defeating annually at the polls old-fashioned Republicans like Dearborn and Crowninshield, more easily than in 1816 the eloquent Dexter,* now dead, who as convert or apostate had made an impressive opponent. Under the annual election system, while all moves smoothly, indolence and the dread of change operate powerfully in favor of the old ticket. By way of appeal to the commercial spirit of the State, which still predominated, it was the custom on the canvass to parade a model ship "Massachusetts," with mottoes, a Jack-tar address being made to the "jolly voters;" and the ship, whose colors were displayed for Commodore Brooks at the mainmast, now bore at the fore a pennant inscribed "Washington and Monroe policy." †

Not so smoothly, however, set the current in Connecticut; for here a great civil revolution ran its bloodless course, the perverse inflexibility of the orthodox Federalists costing them the last morsel of political power. A coalition of Republicans with the proscribed religious sects miscarried, as we have seen, in the spring election of 1816; ‡

* See vol. ii. p. 461.

† See Boston Centinel, picture, March 28, 1818.

‡ See vol. ii, p. 461.

but a year later this toleration ticket prevailed, and Wolcott was chosen Governor. The canvass was one of the most violent ever witnessed in that State. In John Cotton Smith, the defeated candidate, appeared the last of the old Connecticut *régime* of courtly but stiff-necked and bigoted magistrates who stood for steady habits, the discipline of youth, and the repression of all backsliders. With him passed away the queue, the cockaded hat, powder, black stockings, knee-breeches and buckles, and those other awe-inspiring emblems of Connecticut authority which marked training-day in the olden times. Wolcott was a man of good patrician antecedents, else, perhaps, he might not have been chosen; being the third Governor of Connecticut in a direct line from father to son, born in Litchfield, a town prolific in great men of conservative repute, and himself identified in the past with the inner counsels of Washington, Hamilton, and the elder Adams; besides being blessed in a most agreeable wife and family. An experienced banker, long accustomed to metropolitan life, and yet attached to his native State, a man of sobriety, plain and direct in manners, and not so much a converted Federalist as a liberalized one, Wolcott amply fulfilled the expectations of those who supported him for chief executive. He ruled Connecticut for ten years, temperately and wisely, meantime instituting and perfecting all the reforms needful for bringing that State into full harmony with the nation.

1817. April.

This, it should be observed, was a religious quite as much as a political triumph. Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Universalists, radical infidels, all who had been placed under the ban of the old Congregational establishment with which State Federalism had been inseparably connected, united at the polls with the Republicans to throw off the yoke of intolerance. Some of these church preferences had been created by statute, others rested upon Puritan tradition. Orthodoxy constantly ruled Yale College and the common-school system; and under existing laws, to which the ruling set had, with Jewish pertinacity, adhered,

taxation was employed to the utmost for the special benefit of this Congregational establishment, and to the detriment of all other religious bodies. The political framework and machinery, whose basis was the old royal charter of the colony, were well adapted to these ends; nor had State rulers thought it a disadvantage that the State might thus be swerved the more readily from allegiance to a national government with which they themselves could have little sympathy while Jefferson and free-thinking maxims prevailed.

Wolcott's first election in the spring of 1817 was by a very close vote. The lower or popular branch of the State legislature showed a small Republican majority ; but as the upper house or secret council was Federalist still, all measures of reform were thrown out, and the popular will for the moment thwarted. Monroe's visit, however, to Connecticut, with its soothing incidents, so far aided a new appeal to the voters, that at an adjourned session in the fall, with some of the obstructionists thrown out, the legislature entered upon its promised work. One of the first reforms consisted in a repeal of what was known as the "stand-up law," long used by the old leaders as a clog upon public opinion.* The next spring Wolcott was re-elected Governor, with both branches of the legislature fully committed to the cause of reform. A State convention was accordingly ordered to assemble at Hartford in August. It met, organized by the choice of the Governor to preside, prepared and offered a new constitution 1818.

* By this "stand-up law," which seems to have passed the legislature during the bitter times of 1801, all votes for councillors, or members of the upper house or secret council, were required to be given for one candidate at a time ; the freemen standing up or rising while counted, in case of a division. This of course deterred dependent voters, laborers, clerks and the like, from voting when the conflict was sharp, or else exposed one to ruin if he voted courageously. The effect of this law may be the better appreciated when the reader recalls that the senior names were first voted upon in town-meeting. These councillors, with their legislative and executive functions, constituted a secret force in the State whose combinations were not easily resisted. See *supra*, vol. ii, p. 17.

in place of the old charter, whose vagueness of expression had fostered many an abuse. Church and State were henceforth separated, no one was to be compelled to join or support any religious association, and each sect was allowed to tax its members for its own support. The right of suffrage was liberally extended, and voting was to be by ballot. The powers of government were better distributed than before, and the great departments were separated ; the old secret council or board of assistants being converted into an open senate, with a slight increase of numbers, and sessions of the legislature becoming annual instead of twice a year. Judges under the old charter had held office annually ; they were now to be appointed by the General Assembly, and hold office by the tenure of good behavior. This constitution, adopted in convention with its declaration of rights, September 15th, was sanctioned by the suffrage of the people, and finally promulgated by the 12th of October.* Thus speedily did the sons of Connecticut, by identifying themselves with a new Hartford convention, cast off disloyal imputations, together with the bonds of bigotry, and reunite their fortunes with those of other States whose common watchword was the Union. Peace followed this signal victory of popular rights ; and though it was yet too early for the voluntary system of religious support to gain here a complete footing, this constitution of 1818 has ever since remained the organic law of the State.

It should be added, in justice to the old rulers whose sun was set, that, like conscientious stewards, they had kept the

* See Hough's American Constitutions. The act authorizing the Connecticut Convention passed July 4, 1818. Pierrepont Edwards was prominent in that body. The vote for adoption, Oct. 5, 1818, showed 13,918 in favor of the new constitution, and 12,361 against it. As heretofore, the sessions of the legislature were to be held alternately at Hartford and New Haven ; and it was long before Connecticut dispensed with that time-honored custom. Rhode Island, which for many years longer continued to use its royal charter, is now the only State in the Union which pursues the system of a dual capital.

One of the new acts passed by the Connecticut legislature in 1818 permitted the proprietors of the mail stages to carry passengers through that State on the Sabbath.

public accounts with economy and exactness. They left a State Treasury free from debt, with the school and other funds in a sound and prosperous condition.

In the politics of other States, if there is found little at this period to interest the political student, there is less to condemn. The tendencies of local legislation throughout the land were popular and humane. In Maryland, where the legislature still chose the governor, efforts were being made to amend the constitution so as to give the choice to the people. The Virginia legislature passed, in 1818, the act for establishing that University which it was Jefferson's present ambition to found and organize before his death. A decided ascendency of liberal if not Republican ideas appeared in nearly all of the States by the spring of 1818, excepting, perhaps, little Delaware, into whose peculiar tenets new sunshine seldom penetrated. 1817–1818.

Among the issues of the day which threatened new political combinations, that of internal improvements deserves further mention. With society sweetened in its harmonious intercourse, we had turned already as by a common impulse to great undertakings, of which the Erie canal seemed at this hour the most gigantic. Throughout America new roads, new canals, new edifices, were projected. To meet this enormous outlay and competition, the State, the public, would be urged to subscribe, if not to shoulder the enterprise. Admitting, however, the right of a State legislature in the premises, how stood it with Congress and the national government? For the extension of roads and canals beyond State limits, so as to knit remote parts of the Union together, was by all conceded to be a national benefit. We have seen that one of Madison's last official acts was to negative a bill which proposed setting apart a national fund for internal improvements.* The Executive objection being the constitutional one, a dissension now arose in the Republican ranks; many leaders, in their eager-

* See vol. ii, p. 451.

ness to commit the general treasury to projects, popular in their own State, whose cost its legislature dared not assume, acceding to that liberal construction of national powers for which Hamilton and the Federalists had earlier contended; while others held to Jefferson and the old Virginia doctrine that the federal constitution conferred a delegated authority from the States or the people which should be strictly interpreted. The main question, was whether to place a broad or narrow construction upon that phrase of the instrument which gives Congress authority to lay taxes "to pay the debts and provide for the general welfare," so as to extend or not the powers specifically enumerated to whatever would promote the general welfare.

"Our tenet ever was," wrote Jefferson in 1817, "and, indeed, it is the only landmark which now divides the Federalists from the Republicans, that Congress had not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but were restrained to those specifically enumerated." * But Jefferson himself had long since favored the application of the Treasury surplus, in times of peace, to public internal improvements for the national benefit, provided only the constitution were first amended so as to give the power. Every State, he now believed, would concede that power; and doing so, we would be rid of that grammatical quibble upon a phrase, which has countenanced the general government in a claim of universal power; a further advantage being that such a concession would be made with some proviso to secure the people against its partial exercise, as, for instance, by requiring the federal ratio of expense in each State.†

Jefferson's theory of a strict interpretation of our national charter, with a recurrence, when needful, to the process of amendment therein set forth, was just and honorable. In practice, however, that process was found exceedingly dif-

* 7 Jefferson's Works, June 16, 1817.
† 7 Jefferson's Works.

ficult to apply, as the Union expanded, States multiplied, and the national interests became complex. To bring three-fourths of all existing States to assent at one time to the same fundamental expression of a change requires indeed a long crusade with rigorous self-denial. Political practice has set differently by warping existing phraseology to the meaning temporarily desired. Each political party, in other words, insists that its own construction of the present charter is the right one, and claims that as constitutional which the passion of the hour may have declared expedient; for to admit that the fundamental law must be changed is meanwhile to submit in obedience to the law as it stands, and this is hard. Twelve amendments to our federal constitution were proposed and accepted within fifteen years of its first adoption, after which the insidious poison of elastic interpretation began to work. As Federalists had created a national bank so did Republicans accept the Louisiana cession, upon the theory of implied powers, Jefferson himself reluctantly yielding his consent. Henceforth our national parties were to fight one another upon the issue not of constitutional change, but of constitutional construction, public opinion being the only recognized arbiter. From 1804 to 1865, a period of much controversy, culminating in civil war, not a single constitutional amendment was proposed by the American Congress to the States for adoption; and the thirteenth amendment of this latter date simply registered and confirmed a decree which the sword had already executed without positive sanction.

The Seminole war, with its singular political consequences, absorbed a large share of the public attention during the second session of this Congress. 1817–1818. So far as that war related to the immediate belligerents and their hostile encounters it hardly deserved so imposing a title; but the disputes, domestic and international, which Jackson's method of conducting it engendered, gives to that contest a memorable importance in our history.

The Seminoles were a nation of Florida Indians, com-

posed chiefly of Creeks who had drawn off at different times from the main body, and turned southwards, mingling with the remnants of other tribes beyond our borders. The Creeks called them "Seminoles" or "wanderers," and claimed them as a part of their own nation; but all such relationship the descendants of these errant bands repudiated. Foreigners constantly, and susceptible to Spanish or English influence, as the case might be, until Florida was annexed, the Seminoles became and ever continued implacable enemies of the United States, earning the repute of desperate fighters who neither give nor ask quarter, but, driven to the shelter of the almost impenetrable everglades, would there remain at bay until disease or the pursuer's bayonet exterminated them.

During the war of 1812 many of these fugitive Indians, together with runaway negroes from Georgia and South Carolina, aided our enemy in their southern operations, the British Colonel Nichols commanding a force which landed in Pensacola to procure these motley recruits. Even after the conclusion of peace the British officers in this remote quarter seemed to take it upon themselves to promote strife; partly perhaps because of sympathy with their savage friends, but more out of malice towards those of the white race, and certainly after an adventurous fashion of their own, without clear warrant from the British crown and in utter defiance of the maxims of international law.

1815. Creek refugees, who had joined the Seminoles, were thus taught to believe that under the treaty of Ghent the lands they surrendered to the United States as the penalty of their own defeat must be restored to them. Remonstrance having been made, Lord Bathurst disavowed Nichols's acts and a treaty with the Creeks that he had made. Nichols, however, repaired and strengthened a fort on the Appalachicola river, about seventeen miles from its mouth and sixty miles below the boundary line between Florida and the United States. This British stronghold, so to speak, erected in Spanish territory, he stocked with arms and ammunition, leaving it for his red and sooty allies to

seize upon and occupy together immediately upon his departure. The "Negro Fort," as it was called, became a serious menace to the United States authorities, and doubtless to slave-owners in Georgia. In 1816 the Governor at Pensacola was requested to reduce it, but he did not. It was presently invested by an American force, and with a red-hot shot from one of our gunboats, which penetrated a powder magazine, blown to pieces. Of 300 negro men, women and children, and 20 Indians who were huddled behind its saucy ramparts, not less than 270 lost their lives in the explosion.*

Under General Gaines, who at this time held command of our forces on the Florida frontier, an American fort had been built higher up the Appalachicola, at the junction of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers, and of course within the dominions of the United States. This was called Fort Scott. During 1817 there were frequent collisions in its neighborhood, and on the river of two sovereignties, between whites and Indians. The filibusters and freebooters of Amelia Island, not yet dislodged, added to the turmoil in this quarter. Woodbine, an English adventurer, who had served under Nichols, came and disappeared mysteriously, stirring up the Creek refugees to assert their pretended claims as before; and other Britons, equally irresponsible, hovered about the scene like hawks, bent, apparently, upon stirring up a border Indian war by which they might profit. It was a strange and motley brood of harpies, speculators and mock friends of humanity, which had thus gathered in dangerous proximity to south-eastern Georgia, reckless of embroiling the United States with the Seminoles, provided they themselves might find the shelter of a neutral flag.

* See Public Documents; Parton's Jackson; Sumner's Jackson. Some of the main facts are in dispute. One statement is that this investment of the "Negro Fort" by our forces was without direct provocation; another, that boats bringing American supplies up the Appalachicola were first fired upon from the fort. It is also alleged, though the proof is not positive, that the Spanish authorities at Pensacola willingly permitted the destruction of this fort, being themselves annoyed at its establishment by the British.

Neutral in fact amid such disreputable surroundings, Florida, a soil without a jurisdiction, could not be. Spain had long since bound herself by solemn treaty * to restrain forcibly all hostilities against the United States on the part of Indians inhabiting this province. But while insisting that her sovereignty should be respected, Spain failed to fulfil her word, not so much, perhaps, because disinclined, as because she was unable to do so. Hence the imperious necessity already noticed which was presented to the United States of driving the McGregor and Aury herd out of Amelia Island and taking temporary possession; and hence, too, a later necessity, which now arose, of pursuing hostile Indians from Florida over the border, an act, which, as intended, at least, by our administration, conformed with the law of nations.

1817. The blame for the various collisions which precipitated the Seminole war, now to be described, need not be placed entirely upon the Indians themselves; for under such a chaotic condition of affairs as existed at the borders by 1817, alarm and exasperation must have been general; and as for invasions from Florida, the worst aggressor was probably far in the rear. Gaines sought to do his duty as a soldier; one task being to check those depredations on Georgia soil of which the uneasy backwoodsmen now loudly complained. By these depredations was meant, plainly enough, that the Creeks claimed as their own once more the lands which conquest and their own unsuccessful war had forced them to sign away. Outrages and murders followed, now on the one side, now on the other. Our general had summoned to his presence the suspected chief of a little Seminole village called by the American settlers Fowltown, and situated near the Florida line, on lands claimed by the United States. The Fowltown

Nov. 20, 21. chief responded by a threat of violence, refusing to go. Gaines at once detached a force of 250 men, under Colonel Twiggs, with orders either to bring

* See Treaty, Oct. 27, 1795, art. v.; 8 U. S. Stats. at Large, 140.

the warrior or treat him as an enemy. As Twiggs and his men entered the Indian village at early dawn, the crack of rifles saluted them. They returned the fire, and their assailants fled, with the loss of two men and one woman killed and several wounded. Searching the deserted village, Twiggs found proofs that the Fowltown chief was in league with the Florida filibusters, and under Gaines's orders the settlement was burned. Indian retaliation followed, swift and atrocious. Scarcely nine days after the fight at Fowltown a large open boat was ascending the Appalachicola, which contained forty of our soldiers and several women and little children, together with supplies for Fort Scott. As the crowded boat, keeping close to the shore, moved sluggishly by a swamp thickly covered with trees and cane, a volley of musketry announced an ambush; and leaping forth the moment they saw our party thrown into confusion by their fire, the Seminole avengers rushed into the stream, caught hold of the boat, and made their butchery complete. Men and women were scalped without discrimination; the children were taken by the heels, and their brains dashed out against the sides of the boat. Only five escaped to carry the woful tidings to Fort Scott.*

Thus originated the Seminole war, in an act of tenfold retaliation. When the Indian snuffs carnage he rages like a wolf, and is not glutted by a single victory. News of this massacre reached Washington just as the administration was resolving how to deal with Amelia Island. In cabinet meeting it was determined that General Gaines should assemble all the disposable forces within reach, including militia from Georgia, and reduce the hostile Indians by force, pursuing them into East Florida should they take refuge there. It was also decided that General Jackson, who commanded this military department, with headquarters at Nashville, should be sent immediately to the front, there to take personal command of our forces.† Dec. 26.

* See 13 Niles's Register; Seminole War Documents; Parton's Jackson, etc.

† John Quincy Adams's Diary, 1817.

A remarkable man now emerges from brief retirement into conspicuous notice, to fix more constantly the public gaze, and even concentrate it, until recognized as the most striking American of the age, and in a certain sense the most popular, if not the most illustrious. For whatever Jackson might do, were it done rightly or wrongly, he threw himself vigorously into the act, and made a deep impression, often a sensation, such, probably, as he studied to produce. As the hero of New Orleans and conqueror of the Creeks, he enjoyed already the best military renown of all our generals who had served in the second war, because the only one of them all who had won a brilliant victory. Peace did not find him first in actual rank, however, nor was his reputation derived from that trying test against a skillful foe, which exacts the steady discipline of forces in hand, profound insight, a mind capable of combining and of studying the intricate combinations of others, an executive grasp of the thousand minute details involved in feeding, equipping, and moving a large army separated into detachments, and, above all, self-command under difficulties. No one, perhaps, except Washington and Hamilton, had as yet on this continent fulfilled the ideal of commander; certainly none during the late war, whose military exploits furnished as much for blushing as boasting; though Jacob Brown, now the ranking general, and certainly a well-deserving hero, displayed a bureau capacity for times of peace which few would have conceded to one so rash, so unlearned, and withal so little used to conventional forms as Jackson. Nevertheless, this one had addressed himself to the humbler task of subduing savages or defending a city with an audacity, zeal, and fertility of resource deserving of wider opportunities; and he alone could have said, with Cæsar, "I came, I saw, I conquered."

For public affairs in their broad relation, Jackson showed great defects of character. It was not that he lacked training so much as that he had been ill trained. He was guided by a quick instinct of sympathy for the miserable or of jealousy towards the proud; but to award to each his just due was beyond his power, his theory being that

friends should be rewarded and enemies punished, and friendship consisting chiefly in dependence upon him or devotion to his lead. True to his Scotch-Irish antecedents, he was of a hot and rebellious temper, a man of unchecked feelings, warming to those who trusted, but angrily throwing off whomsoever might cross his wishes. The right or reason he rarely weighed, nor viewed from the stand-point of a calm indifference; for an issue, to his mind, had but one side, namely, that which he had espoused, and consequently meant to bear through. At the age of fifty he had not learned that primary lesson of office-holding, to suppress a feeling for the sake of a surer tenure, nor that first of military duties, subordination. When Monroe came into the Presidency he found Jackson staking his major-general's commission upon a quarrel with the War Department, having already nursed a feud with Crawford of the Treasury.* Before Madison's retirement, a subordinate engineer officer within Jackson's division had been detailed by an order transmitted directly to him, through inadvertence, and not through the division commander. Jackson, conceiving himself insulted, was not contented to send a remonstrance by mail on the day of Monroe's inauguration, which could receive no immediate attention, inasmuch as the War Office had no head, but issued at Nashville a peremptory order, forbidding all officers in his division to obey any orders from the War Department which were not transmitted through the general commanding. A military imbroglio was the result, which the for-

1817.

April 22.

* Jackson's trouble with Crawford arose about 1816, while the latter was in temporary charge of the War Department. Jackson had insisted upon a greater cession of land from the Cherokees and suppliant Creeks under their treaty than to them seemed just. The Cherokees appealed, and Crawford modified the treaty. Jackson resumed the negotiation, and bought back the land which was retroceded, a conclusion of the business which greatly increased his popularity with the people of Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama, who were interested in procuring the cession. But, notwithstanding he prevailed in the end, he bitterly resented Crawford's decision, to which his mind could impute no motive but that of a personal affront.

bearing Monroe kindly smoothed out upon Calhoun's appointment to the War Department, without, however, bringing a junior major-general of the army to acknowledge himself at fault. A second military quarrel had meanwhile grown out of the affair, namely, with General Winfield Scott. Some anonymous scribbler in New York charged this officer, as it appears, with commenting upon Jackson's order as mutinous. Jackson sent a copy of this letter to Scott, who was stationed in that city. Denying the authorship of a newspaper article to which the anonymous letter had referred, Scott proceeded in a courteous strain, obviously not intended for offense, to maintain his own opinion that Jackson's order was mutinous in its tendency, since any order from the War Department is presumed to emanate from the commander-in-chief. The same denial accompanied by a simple disclaimer of responsibility for the dinner-table remarks made in private company would, perhaps, have pacified Jackson, who was a man of honor; but strictures like these from a subordinate, however honestly uttered, could not but rouse him to fury. Jackson, in a second letter, angrily charged Scott with "pompous insolence and bullying expression," and with "stabbing a brother-officer in the dark." Other allusions to "intermeddling spies and pimps of the War Department" * show how easily Jackson's heart-strings could be swept by the unknown hand of one who professed a personal homage; for the imputations were false. To Jackson's overwrought letter, which seemed intended to provoke a duel should they ever meet, Scott responded, from New York, good-naturedly and somewhat jocosely, as though to recall Achilles to his better self, intimating that, as a mortal combat did not seem necessary to test the courage of either of them, he must decline it; and thus for a time the

August–Sept.

Dec. 3.

* This allusion is to the anonymous writer's charge that the war office gentry had placed spies about General Brown, and had probably done the same to Jackson; that government expected to do well without the aid of Tennessee, etc. Jackson's affair had not yet been adjusted by Calhoun.

subject dropped.* A hostile correspondence with General Adair, over the conduct of the Kentucky troops at the battle of New Orleans, whom Jackson had charged with inglorious flight, belongs likewise to the newspaper sensations of this year.†

Monroe in his mature years was extremely tolerant of the idiosyncrasies of one in service, provided he felt the man himself to be in earnest. He believed in Jackson as a genuine patriot, one of exalted traits, and wished to be a little blind to faults, while generously estimating his virtues. Sensitive, too, over that defection in the western section, whose soil in truth was at present as lean of statesmen as it was rich in vegetable products, and which he searched in vain to find leaders both capable and friendly to his administration, he had politic reasons for keeping one so popular in that quarter as Jackson firmly attached to him. Indeed, so anxious was the President to give Jackson some public proof of his confidence, that, in spite of these brawls, he might have tendered him the Russian mission, except for a pungent protest from Jefferson, which recalled to his good sense the absurdity of such an appointment.‡

Here let us remark, that between the two great leaders of the American democracy, as developed down to the era of the civil war of 1861, the earlier and the later, cordiality never existed; each seems never to have appreciated the other, and certainly the younger never acknowledged himself a disciple. The passing conjunction of two natures, powerful and original, but singularly inharmonious, and never brought into practical co-operation, explains this antipathy; for antipathy it must be called. Jefferson and Jackson first met in 1797 at Philadelphia, the temporary capital; the one Vice-President elect, and the recognized

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* 16 Niles's Register; 4 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; Parton's Jackson.

† See 2 Parton's Jackson, c. 29.

‡ When, in Virginia, in the fall of 1817, President Monroe inquired of Jefferson how it would suit to appoint Jackson to Russia, Jefferson's answer was, "Why, good God! he would breed you a quarrel before he had been there a month." 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1818.

leader of a party which exulted in the first flush of national victory, persuading his friends to give Washington a generous exit; the other new to politics and the polite constraints of society, a sullen nobody of that party, sitting in the Senate like a cynic in his tub, shaggy and uncouth in appearance, who doggedly refused to offer incense to the retiring President.* And thus it went on for the brief remnant of Jackson's first sojourn in national politics; the urbane president of the Senate watching with amusement a member who was so choleric and ill at ease that when he rose to speak the words choked in his throat. Jackson, in fact, was not cut out to figure in a deliberative body of dignified men; and the turning-point of his career came when Tennessee made this toughest of her pioneers, at the age of 34, a major-general of State militia. Jefferson, then, was of the upper stratum in republican politics, Jackson of the lower; the one of good blood and inherited fortune, seeming to stoop that he might serve the multitude; the other a man of the multitude, and of those jealous democrats, moreover, who envied the nobly born; indeed, a southern white of extraction so humble, that to this day it is a matter of dispute whether he was born in North or South Carolina.† In Jefferson appeared tact, the desire to convince, and a perserving good humor; Jackson, on the other hand, though perserving, was only good-humored while he had his own way, could be influenced by those alone who knew how to play upon his vanity, and was satisfied when he compelled. Jefferson was smooth and diplomatic, Jackson dogged and downright. The one belonged to that older school of our politics which separates public from private friendship, puts the trustworthy and capable first, and remits each who serves to his proper place; but with the latter the main theory was to make both public and private friendship consist in

* See vol. i, p. 333.

† Parton fixes Jackson's birthplace in Union County, North Carolina; Kendall, in South Carolina. Jackson, in his proclamation of 1832, and other documents, calls himself a native of South Carolina. See Sumner's Andrew Jackson, 1, 2.

personal attachment to himself, and use patronage as the rich spoils of martial victory.

While these two remarkable men remained in contact, the one was the idol of his party, and kept the reins of national discipline, while the other idolized no one, preferring the easy surroundings of frontier life and to rise in wealth and consequence with his adopted State. His choice was discreet for his personal advancement; for Tennessee long clung to her favorite son, and Jackson's devoted band advanced him with unflagging zeal in the teeth of a formidable prejudice, inherited from our colonial ancestors, in favor of trained statesmanship and social culture as essential qualifications for high public trusts.*

Jackson was strongly attached, at the present time, to Monroe. He had supported him for President, and owned the kindliness and generosity of his nature. But Monroe and Jackson were men of a different mould; nor did the sycophants of the latter fail to excite his ardor by flattering comparisons with those of higher station. Unquestionably, at this period of his career, the tall general, in epaulettes and full uniform, a man of military mien and noble bearing, conspicuous among a thousand, was every inch a commander; and where he figured in society, unpolished and easy as he might appear when only his backwoods friends were about him, he rose to the occasion. Ladies were charmed because he did them genuine reverence; and in mixed company he could carry himself with a captivating grace, in which seemed to mingle self-respect and a sincere sympathy. Monroe understood himself, however, as chief magistrate, while Jackson and his intimates had most likely expected to find him pliable.† Why otherwise should Jackson, warm friend though he was, and ardent and impulsive in his own course of conduct, have undertaken to tutor and push the President into difficulties so confidently at the outset?

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* See 1 Webster's Correspondence; Sumner's Jackson.

† See 2 Parton's Jackson, 356, 371.

As for Spain and her Florida provinces, Jackson's views of policy had been pronounced long before the Seminole campaign was confided to his charge. Like so many others in the western country, he had, in 1806, lent an ear to Burr's mysterious project, until it appeared that treason rather than Mexican conquest was the object of the expedition. A few years later, when tendering his services for the war of 1812, he wrote that his Tennessee men had no "constitutional scruples," but would, if directed, plant the American eagle on the walls of Mobile, Pensacola, and St. Augustine.* As department commander at the southwest after the war he procured the destruction of the negro fort on the Appalachicola; and this affair exposing the weakness of Spanish rule in Florida, speculators soon after began buying land near Pensacola, some of whom were personal friends and near connections of Jackson, who approved the investment.† In short, the general was an inveterate don-hater, and to seize Pensacola and occupy the Floridas as indemnity for our claims upon Spain had long been his desire. And now, on the outbreak of the Seminole war, and in prospect of a march across the borders, he pressed Monroe, in a private letter, to do more than authorize a pursuit of the flying enemy into the Spanish dominions. Seize East Florida, was his advice, and hold it as indemnity for the outrages of Spain upon the property of our own citizens. "This," he added, confidentially, "can be done without implicating the government. Let it be signified to me through any channel (say Mr. J. Rhea) that the possession of the Floridas would be desirable to the United States, and in sixty days it will be accomplished." ‡

1817.

1818. Jan. 6.

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* Sumner's Jackson.

† 2 Parton's Life of Jackson.

‡ Letter of January 6, 1818, printed in full in 2 Parton's Jackson, 433. See also article in Magazine Am. Hist., 1884, by the present author reprinted in "Historical Briefs," and entitled "Monroe and the Rhea Letter," which shows in detail the singular political controversy which afterwards arose in connection with this letter, as quoted in the text.

This singular epistle, which indicated on the general's part a personal wish to carry the war into Spain precisely as he afterwards did, heedless of the lawlessness of such a course and the perfidy to which it must have exposed our responsible Executive in the eyes of mankind, was written from Nashville before Jackson had received his marching orders. Those orders, already on their way from Washington, directed him to proceed to the seat of war and take personal command, observing the restrictions which the President had already imposed on his predecessor, General Gaines.* The commanding general might cross the Florida line, if necessary, in pursuit of his flying enemy could they be reached and punished in no other way, for this the law of nations permitted; but on no account was he to molest or threaten a Spanish post; and should the Seminoles find refuge within a Spanish fortress, he was to relinquish the pursuit and take no further steps without receiving new and explicit orders from the War Department.

1818. Dec.

Dec. 26.

What the probable effect of Jackson's advice upon a President, high-minded and considerate, and sure to take no new step without much deliberation, we need not ask. The letter was a long one, and when it reached Washington Monroe was lying sick. Merely glancing at the heading, he gave the letter to Calhoun, who remarked, after looking it over, that it was a confidential one relating to Florida, and required the President's own answer. "Have you forwarded to General Jackson the orders of Gaines on that subject?" The Secretary of War replying that he had, Monroe laid the letter aside among other private papers, where it was forgotten.†

1818.

The secret channel thus indicated by Jackson was through John Rhea, better known to statesmen of the day as "Johnny Rhea," a member of Congress from Tennessee, and a man who was reputed a parasite of Jackson.

* Jackson's January letter shows that he understood those restrictions upon Gaines; it argued, in fact, for a greater latitude of discretion.

† See Monroe Corr. 1818; Magazine Am. History, Oct. 1884.

On the 11th of January, Jackson received at the Hermitage * his marching orders, and with the promptness, energy, and self-reliance habitual with him, assumed his responsible trust. Liberally construing his authority to call upon the State Executive for militia in addition to volunteers already summoned by General Gaines in Georgia, besides the garrison of about 800 regulars at the front, he enrolled 1000 or more Tennesseeans, who joyfully flocked to his standard, and left Nashville on the 22d for northern Georgia. Here he made a junction with a militia detachment from that State, and procuring afterwards at the Creek village of Chehaw a brigade of friendly Indians, he drove the Seminoles before him with a force vastly superior in point of numbers. In spite of hard marches through a country which yielded but a scanty supply of food and forage, Fort Scott was reached by March 9; and pushing forward down the Appalachicola to meet provision-boats which were on their way from New Orleans, Jackson occupied the site of the late negro fort, where he built a depot for supplies, and called it Fort Gadsden.

1818. January. March.

In the rapid pursuit of his prey, Jackson had now crossed the line, and encamped in a foreign and nominally neutral province. Burning in the neighborhood of Tallahassee a few paltry Seminole villages, he appeared before St. Mark's, the only Spanish post in the vicinity. Here, it appears, some of the enemy had taken refuge, and here, too, as is not unlikely, hostile Indians were supplied with guns and ammunition. Our General asked leave to garrison the place with his own troops while the war lasted; the Spanish commandant hesitating, Jackson seized the post without further parley, encountering no resistance beyond a formal protest.

April 6-7.

Remaining at St. Mark's for two days, and inspiring new terror by hanging on the spot two Red Stick chiefs who had fallen into his hands, Jackson next set out in pursuit

* The name applied to Jackson's comfortable home at Nashville.

of the enemy. His march was directly against Suwanee, the town of the Seminole chief Boleck or Bolegs, distant about one hundred and seven miles, and reached only by a toilsome march through a swampy country. The foe had by some means been forewarned; and having conveyed their women and cattle to a place of safety, they abandoned their little village to its fate, after a fruitless skirmish or two. By many a hidden, winding path the red wanderers disappeared into their amphibious retreat, the home of the palmetto and alligator; and so the Seminole war ended.

Among the prisoners taken in one of these latest Indian encounters was Ambrister, a native of New Providence, and an ex-lieutenant of British marines, who, formerly in his country's service at Florida, and, as it appears, under Nichols's command, had lately returned, under the auspices, most probably, of the freebooters at Amelia Island, and, in fact, holding a commission under McGregor, to aid in the lawless speculations on foot in the name of liberty. With this young soldier of fortune, Arbuthnot, a trader, a cool, reticent man, of Scotch origin, many years older, who had acquired much influence among the Creek malcontents of Florida, by espousing, like Nichols, their pretensions of Georgia lands, under the treaty of Ghent, had some mysterious connection. Intimate with the suspected governor of St. Mark's, he solicited favors for these Indians; and it so happened, moreover, that upon the person of a captured negro was found, about the same time, a letter written by this amateur diplomatist from St. Mark's, which, purposely or not, conveyed to our enemy a timely warning of the intended attack at Suwanee. While at St. Mark's, Jackson had looked on Arbuthnot with a distrustful eye; and, easily set in his convictions, it needed only such circumstantial proofs of complicity with the Indian outbreaks to determine him, under the circumstances, to make an audacious example. Disbanding part of his volunteer force, whose services he no longer needed, the American general had

Apr. 17–18.

returned with his exhausted troops to St. Mark's, disappointed of his prey, and in a frame of mind by no means amiable. Ambrister now being brought in as a prisoner, Arbuthnot, too, was ordered into close confinement, and before an American court-martial, over which
Apr. 25–28. Gaines presided, these two British subjects were speedily arraigned for trial. The old trader was acquitted of the charge of being a spy, but found guilty of stirring up the Indians to war with the United States, and furnishing material aid.* Ambrister, who had been taken in arms while commanding Indians, pleaded guilty to that charge, and threw himself on the mercy of the court. Both prisoners were condemned to death, Arbuthnot to be hanged, Ambrister to be shot ; but youth and prepossessing manners pleaded so strongly in favor of the latter, that the military court, on reconsideration, commuted the sentence to fifty stripes on the bare back and confinement to hard labor with a ball and chain for twelve months. This reconsideration Jackson set aside, and approved both sentences as originally found, on the ground that "an
April 29. individual making war against the citizens of any other nation, the two nations being at peace, forfeits his allegiance, and becomes an outlaw and pirate." Both the unfortunate prisoners were accordingly executed by a detail of troops, without shrift or appeal ; Ambrister betraying no little sorrow in being exposed to a death so ignomin-

* The proof of this was circumstantial. Arbuthnot had written one of the chiefs of the lower Creeks, insisting that they were entitled by the treaty of Ghent to the same territory as they possessed before the war, notwithstanding the Indian cession which followed the Creek war ; a position quite untenable, and probably taken from interested motives hostile to the United States. Copies of letters were also produced from among Arbuthnot's papers, one of them containing an application to Bagot, the British minister, for his official interference on behalf of these late allies of the Crown. A discarded clerk testified that Arbuthnot had supplied the Indians with powder ; but possibly this testimony was perjured. The general impression to be derived from all the proofs is that Arbuthnot was probably guilty, but that a reasonable doubt of this guilt nevertheless existed, such as should prevent a conviction under the familiar rules of our criminal law.

ious at the hands of a civilized captor ; Arbuthnot, on the other hand, meeting his fate with composure, and declaring, on the scaffold, that his country would avenge his death.*

Without waiting for this stern atonement to be visited, which, perhaps, baffled rage more than any strict regard for justice or international maxims inspired, Jackson had already turned from St. Mark's with his main body of troops, this time ostensibly on the homeward march. He reached Fort Gadsden May 2d, and after resting there a few days turned westward with some 1200 Tennessee troops and regulars, as though intending to scour the country west of the Appalachicola before departing finally from the seat of war.

About this time Jackson learned of an outrage committed upon the friendly Chehaw village while most of its able-bodied male inhabitants were serving with him in the Seminole campaign. Captain Wright, of the Georgia militia, had been authorized by William Rabun, the newly-chosen governor of that State, to punish some Indian depredations committed in the neighborhood of the Flint river. Misled by false information of its guilt, Wright attacked the Chehaw town, sacked and set it on fire, and cruelly butchered its aged and helpless inhabitants. Jackson blazed with righteous wrath when he heard the news ; and despatching a party of men to arrest Captain Wright and bring him in irons, he sternly demanded satisfaction of the State Executive for this base, cowardly, and inhuman attack "on old men and women," whose warriors were absent fighting the battles of the Union. The right to issue military orders in the field was his own, and no governor of a State should assume to make war against an Indian tribe at peace with the United States and under its protection. Governor Rabun, whose theory of punishing Indians suited better the Georgian point of view, retorted to this scathing rebuke with equal spirit, and a defiant correspondence ensued, in

April 27.

May-June.

* Public Documents ; Niles's Register ; 2 Parton's Jackson.

the course of which the governor, while refusing to give up a State militia officer to be punished by a federal general under whom he had not been serving, disavowed the plunder and massacre which had been committed. The inhumanity of the outrage being thus conceded on both sides the whole affair took a political turn, both parties furnishing their acrimonious letters to the press; and while the national administration was silent, the Georgia legislature approved the conduct of its Executive in all respects.*

In the mean time the relentless Jackson, with his devoted Tennessee troops and the regulars, marched steadily in the direction of Pensacola, the chief Spanish stronghold of East Florida. Receiving on the way the commandant's written protest, accompanied by a threat that, should invasion be attempted, force would be opposed by force, he responded next day by moving upon the town. Pensacola, weak and defenceless, surrendered to the American arms without a struggle. The Spanish commandant sailed with his forces for Havana, almost frantic with grief. Leaving a garrison sufficient to hold the place, our general five days after started northward for home, recrossed the American border safely, and at length reached Nashville, there to receive the loud applause of his fellow-townsmen, who prepared a public banquet in honor of his prowess.† He had indeed put an end to the Seminole

May 24.

May 29.

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* 15 Niles's Register; 2 Parton's Jackson. The United States allowed an indemnity of $8000 for the burning and plundering of the Chehaw village.

† There is considerable discrepancy in the various statements by which Jackson sought to justify his action in capturing Pensacola. In official despatches he makes the most of the Spanish commandant's protest as indicating a hostile feeling, and the inference is, that the receipt of that protest determined him to make the capture. But Parton sets forth a confidential narrative by Jackson to Senator Campbell, which states that he marched from Fort Gadsden for Pensacola intentionally, because of information he had received to the effect that the Pensacola authorities had seized American supplies and given active aid to our enemies, collecting and feeding there more than 500 Indians. Jackson's posthumous statement (see 1 Benton's Thirty Years' View, 168, etc.) makes the important

war after his own cherished methods, by seizing Florida in the name of the United States; and not to leave the conquest unfinished, he presently despatched orders to General Gaines who remained at the front, and on the suggestion that the Spanish governor of St. Augustine had supplied the hostile Indians, authorized him to get proofs and then take possession of the place on the principle of self-preservation; holding its garrison prisoners until Aug. 7. he should hear from the President, or, at his discretion, sending them off to Cuba.* Just as he would have had Wright confined in irons until the pleasure of the President was known regarding the Chehaw massacre, Jackson, in his whole conduct of the Seminole war, adopted the course of seizing and punishing first, leaving to the administration only the choice of releasing from the indignity inflicted. A copy of the St. Augustine order was transmitted to the War Department, not for approval, but fortunately in season for a countermand before Gaines had carried it out. With St. Mark's, Pensacola, and St. Augustine occupied by our troops, Spain would have been completely dispossessed of the peninsula.

Despatches from the seat of war which announced the capture of Pensacola reached Washington early in July; earlier ones relating to Arbuthnot and Ambrister having miscarried. That the administration viewed July.

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admission that he seized Pensacola and virtually annexed Florida to the United States in accordance with the plan proposed by him in his letter to Monroe of January 6, 1818. (See *supra*, p. 68.)

In Jackson's general order to his army, on taking leave to return North, May 29, 1818, it is claimed that the capture of Pensacola was not intended for the purpose of extending the territorial limits of the United States, nor as an act unfriendly to Spain, but because the Seminoles occupying the Spanish territories had for more than two years exposed our citizens to outrages which the Spanish authorities, from policy or necessity, countenanced instead of restraining; and hence the law of self-defence compelled the American government to take possession of points in which the Spanish authority could not be maintained.

* See 16 Niles's Register, 80.

Jackson's proceedings in Florida with amazement and perplexity admits of no question. Not only had explicit orders been sent limiting the right of invading Spanish territory to a strict pursuit of the flying Seminoles, and forbidding the seizure of a Spanish post without express permission, but after those orders had been issued, a new negotiation, commenced for the peaceful acquisition of the Floridas from Spain, had reached an interesting stage of development by the time these startling news arrived. Great Britain's mediation in the difficulty, which Spain much wished, our government had declined about the time Jackson reached the front; but Hyde de Neuville, the French minister at Washington, was the medium of treaty propositions between Onis and our Secretary of State, as though to pledge informally a neutral sovereign as peacemaker. Of all this Jackson was ignorant. Perfidy can never be wisdom where nations negotiate; and were it possible for one like Monroe to be perfidious at all, could he have failed in this instance to perceive that seizing Florida while thus bargaining for it must have embroiled the United States, not with Spain alone, but with other and more formidable powers of Europe?* No sooner, then, was the fall of Pensacola known at Madrid than the King sent orders that treaty negotiations should be suspended and made explicit demands of satisfaction.

The President, on receipt of Jackson's despatches, summoned his cabinet for consultation, reporting plainly to his assembled advisers that Pensacola had been captured contrary to orders. What course the administration should take in consequence did not long remain in doubt, for it was agreed in council with little hesitation that Jackson's unauthorized proceedings must be disavowed. An order was consequently issued to the general commanding to deliver the posts; Pensacola unconditionally to any person whom Spain might empower to receive it, and St. Mark's (being in the heart of the Indian country) on arrival of a competent force to protect it against the savages and their

July.

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1818.

allies.* Still later, when Jackson's order with reference to St. Augustine became known, the War Department promptly forbade General Gaines to execute it.† The Spanish governor at St. Mark's may have been an accomplice of the Seminoles; but there was nothing to implicate the other Spanish commandants clearly; nor if all were guilty, did self-preservation require a summary seizure of the posts, or a presumption that Spain sanctioned the treachery of her provincial agents.

For ten years the secret of these cabinet conferences was kept with fidelity, after which Crawford broke the seal; in part for the sake of clearing himself with Jackson, but chiefly out of malice towards Calhoun, a bitter personal enemy, for the time triumphant, whom he sought to displace from Jackson's confidence. Jackson himself, hugging the delusion that men decide questions of state purely from personal bias, and that through thick and thin a friend constantly defends while an enemy opposes, had in the interval pictured Crawford as a marplot in these cabinet discussions, working to destroy him, while Calhoun stood up for him boldly, right or wrong, though humiliated by the disobedience of his own orders. To him, therefore, the Secretary of War was "an honest man, the noblest work of God," and as such he toasted him on a public occasion. Possibly Calhoun permitted Jackson to delude himself on that point; though it was natural enough that momentary anger should be succeeded by more generous emotions on his own part. As a matter of fact, Calhoun was quite as outspoken against Jackson's proceedings in these cabinet conferences as Crawford himself, perhaps more so; Crawford, moreover, was cool and unimpassioned while Calhoun was excited, declaring in one of the earlier discussions that Jackson ought to be court-martialled for his disobedience of orders.‡ That utterance, made under circumstances en-

* Public Documents; Adams's Diary.

† 16 Niles's Register, 80.

‡ See 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1818. Adams's immediate impression was that Calhoun had taken it as a personal offense that Jackson should

titling it to protection, and pardonable in a secretary who had twice been compromised by the insubordinate general, Crawford afterwards betrayed; and though in reality a mere side remark elicited in the course of the main discussion—for whether to punish Jackson or not was not considered at all, the point being simply as to approving or disapproving his military proceedings — it cost Calhoun what in the vicissitudes of politics had become by 1829 the most essential friendship of his national career, and he fell like one climbing a precipice who receives a stab in the back just as he stretches a hand to grasp the summit.

Indeed, these Seminole conferences, once clothed in mystery, but now an open book,* reveal clearly the singular fact that of all Monroe's advisers the Secretary of State alone sustained Jackson's conduct in Florida with bold confidence. It may have been weariness with the dragging negotiations committed to him and contempt for the Spanish monarch whose beggarly insolence tempted us to unrag him of his tattered colonial possessions; it may have been a wise forecast of Jackson's popularity at home; but unquestionably the grim Puritan, who saw through the false glitter of courts and diplomacy, owned fellowship in his heart with the warrior whose scourge had been laid so fearlessly upon the backs of our ill-disguised enemies. Adams at this time knew nothing of Jackson's prepossessions in favor of conquest, nothing of his January letter; but he respected the manliness which could push bravely through the briars that hedge in a king's divinity. That Adams would have gone too far in upholding Jackson's acts, so deeply were his own feelings stirred on his behalf, he was forced himself to admit. The President, as he silently records, received all his suggestions with candor and good humor, but, nevertheless, continued firm in his own unfavor-

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have set the War Department at defiance. A later explanation from Calhoun suggested, however, rather the idea that he had heard of the southwestern speculations in land about Pensacola and thought for the moment that Jackson connived at those operations.

* See the published Diary of John Quincy Adams, 1818.

able opinion. And, altering the draft of Adams's letter to Onis, which stated the conclusions reached by this government, while screening the American commander from reproach, Monroe observed, "You have gone too far in justifying Jackson's acts in Florida." "I think," he added, "that the public will not entirely justify the general; and the true course for ourselves is to shield and support him as much as possible, but not commit the administration on points where the public will be against us." *

In disavowing Jackson's unauthorized seizure of the Spanish fortresses, and honorably restoring what the American troops had seized with so little effort, our government could not but favorably impress Europe by the spectacle of honest forbearance; and if so, Spain's resentment must needs evaporate. Three objects Monroe here kept in view: to secure the constitution from any breach, to deprive Spain and her allies of any just cause of war, and to turn the whole affair to the best account of the country.† Jackson was not punished for his mistake; on the contrary, his proceedings, attended as they were with good results, the President defended to the utmost. The defence devolved upon the Secretary of State, whose brilliant despatches, full of pungency and spirit, and throbbing, like Jackson's letters, with an intense conviction, put the blame of invasion directly upon Spain herself for failing to fulfil the treaty stipulations of 1795, and setting loose upon our borders, either carelessly or wilfully, the parti-colored horde of British, barbarians and fugitive slaves which should have been restrained.‡

Not less skillfully, but in a strain somewhat specious, did Adams deal in this correspondence with the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister, which promised a controversy not easy under most circumstances to compose. Arbuth-

* Adams, who felt the force of the criticism, observes in his Diary that this view of the case is wise, just, and generous. J. Q. Adams's Diary, November, 1818.

† Monroe MSS. letters, February, 1819, to Jefferson and Madison.

‡ Monroe MSS.

not he represented as an intruder in Florida, pretending innocent traffic while stirring up the Indians of Florida and the fugitives of the Creek nation to make war upon the United States. He ascribed the origin of the Seminole war to the persistent efforts of Nichols with his mongrel force of runaway negroes, Indians, and pirates, who had been rallied in 1814 to the British standard, but did not cease hostilities against the United States upon the treaty of Ghent; he recalled Woodbine and Ambrister as junior officers once under Nichols's command; and Arbuthnot, he claimed, was Nichols's successor in the same nefarious work.*

This presentation of the American case, in response to the demands of Spain through Señor Pizarro, might have been more audacious than just, but at all events it silenced the Cortes at Madrid. No cause of war was left.† Europe was gladly convinced by Adams's impassioned plea that no interposition was called for; and though Spain must have winced under the flagellation bestowed so freely, prudence suggested to Ferdinand a speedy sale of the Floridas to the rising republic which had so well demonstrated both its self-restraint and the ability to take possession at any time without his permission.

The course of England at this juncture was prompted by the wish not only to guide the counsels of the European Congress, but to preserve unimpaired her new friendship with the United States, whose countenance might soon prove essential to the success of her policy. The problem of the South American revolution made such a friendship especially desirable; and as bearing upon the final issue of that struggle, the ministry was content that the Floridas should become ours by a peaceful purchase. Rarely has the blood of British subjects been permitted to stain a dis-

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* Diplomatic Correspondence, 1818. The Spanish governor of St. Mark's appears to have been culpable; otherwise, however, as to the governor of Pensacola, who, according to Onis, simply performed his duty in resisting Jackson, and was so overcome by his misfortunes as to go mad.

† J. Q. Adams's Diary.

tant soil without so much as a threat of retaliation against the sovereignty responsible for shedding it; but in the instance of Arbuthnot and Ambrister, to whose mischievous designs, fortunately, the British cabinet had not been in the least committed, Castlereagh and his colleagues found their relief most readily in implicitly accepting Adams's exposition of their designs as the true one; and accordingly, though not without murmuring at Jackson's cunning assumption of arbitrary power, which had precluded the plea for mercy, they concluded, now that the unfortunate victims were dead, not to demand retribution, but rather to admit that by their own acts the two had expatriated themselves. This resolve, however, cost the ministry a bitter pang; for the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister stirred deeply the British public, and the American general was placarded as a murderer through the streets of London. As Lord Castlereagh said afterward to Minister Rush, a war might have ensued over this affair "if the ministry had but held up a finger." *

Another delicate task was that of reconciling Jackson himself to the cabinet decision which surrendered the Spanish posts; but the President and Secretary of War undertook it, and with fair success. In a soothing letter, half flattering, half reproachful, the President pointed out to the general that in seizing St. Mark's and Pensacola he had transcended the limits prescribed by his order; acting, in fact, on his own responsibility, though upon facts and circumstances unknown to the government when those orders were transmitted. Jackson set up in defence the peculiar necessities of the case, together with the large military discretion reposed in him, quibbling at some length upon certain expressions in his orders, as though they might be stretched to accommodate what he had done. Monroe, admitting the plea that Jackson might have understood his orders to intend one thing and the commander-in-chief another, advised him to explain him-

* Rush's Residence at the Court of London.

self thus to Calhoun, so as to place himself on the records of the War Department as intending obedience. On this point, however, the old hero was found gruff and unyielding, and the President, in good humor, waived further explanation. Calhoun had already written to impress Jackson with the idea that it was thought impolitic to risk a war with Spain, which might draw upon us powerful allies, such as England.*

Vexed at being overruled, Jackson nevertheless controlled his feelings, and he had at least the satisfaction of knowing that his fellow-townsmen and neighbors, besides a large fraction of the community, applauded his bold raid upon the Spanish provinces.† Secret assurances came from his friends that Calhoun and Adams had stood by him in the cabinet when the Seminole questions were discussed, and that the President himself was his friend.‡ It certainly was true that Monroe, making all allowance for Jackson's errors, was resolved that the administration should stand generously by him; § and of this a first proof was soon afforded when Jackson and Governor Shelby were commissioned together to procure an Indian cession of lands in Kentucky and Tennessee.

In all of Jackson's correspondence with the President, defending his conduct of the Seminole war, one looks in vain for any intimation of a private understanding inconsistent with the orders of the War Department; for the justification constantly relied upon is in pursuance of those orders, but as though they admitted of another construc-

* See correspondence July–December, 1818, cited 2 Parton's Jackson, and printed in 1831; also Monroe MSS.

† At a banquet given to General Jackson at Nashville, this toast was announced: "Pensacola, may our government never surrender it from fear of war." Jackson gave the following: "Our country; though forebearance is her maxim, she should show foreign nations that under a pretense of neutrality her rights are not to be outraged."—Niles's Register.

‡ 2 Parton's Jackson, referring to letter from Colonel Hayne, of South Carolina.

§ See the author's article "Monroe and the Rhea Letter," quoting Monroe MSS. to this effect, Magazine Am. History, October, 1884 (reprinted in "Historical Briefs," p. 97).

tion. Nor is allusion made to Jackson's January letter,*—a letter only striking in the light of what had since transpired. But in the Philadelphia *Aurora* appeared, in December of this year, an anonymous contribution from Nashville, subscribed "B. B.," which, reciting the facts of the Seminole war, observed that the government knew the general's views upon the capture of the Spanish forts before he marched his army into Florida; and if this be so, adds the writer, why, if those views did not meet their own, were not specific orders to the contrary given him? † This essay, whose animus was a violent attack upon himself, Crawford read to the President, and both agreed that it had been written either under Jackson's direction or by some one who had access to his confidential papers. ‡ Such an allusion in the public prints to Jackson's proposal for secret authority to seize Florida touched Monroe's sense of honor, and at the close of a letter to Jackson, penned a few days later, the President explained at length his own illness when Jackson's January letter arrived and the reliance he had placed upon the order transmitted meantime from the war Department ; and stated that he had neither read nor remembered that epistle until Calhoun called it up after the arrival of the despatches which announced the fall of Pensacola. § Monroe's explanation, so far as history is aware, satisfied Jackson, for no further allusion appears to have been made to the subject at this period, and the harmony of their personal relations was fully restored. ‖

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* *Supra*, p. 68.

† Aurora (Philadelphia), December 15, 1818.

‡ Crawford's letter to Monroe, 1830; Calhoun's Seminole Correspondence. See J. Q. Adams's Diary, December 17, 1818, which mentions his finding Secretary Crawford at the President's, reading him this Aurora letter.

§ This is Monroe's letter of December 21, 1818, to Jackson, which is to be found in full in Calhoun's Seminole Correspondence, and strangely garbled in 2 Parton's Jackson.

‖ See at length article on "Monroe and the Rhea Letter," Magazine Am. History, October, 1884; reprinted in "Historical Briefs," p. 97. The precise circumstances under which Jackson's January letter was thus called up by Calhoun are uncertain. Ten years later Crawford felt posi-

With this border conflict ended by putting the Seminoles to flight, with our national honor justly maintained, Europe satisfied, England demanding nothing, and Spain herself so far convinced of our good faith as presently to renew the suspended negotiations with a zeal which promised a speedy consummation of the sale of the Floridas, the whole controversy might well, for the harmony of American politics, have been dropped with its irritating personal issues. The line drawn by our administration in putting the reproof upon the Spanish commandants instead of Jackson, while repudiating whatever acts of the latter might appear to have encroached upon Spain's sovereignty within her own province, is clearly to be traced in the message and official correspondence laid before Congress at the opening of the second session. But the

1818. Nov. 17.

tive that the letter was alluded to at one of the cabinet discussions on the Seminole war ; Monroe not at once remembering that he had received it, but afterwards looking over his files and finding it. But all the other members present at these discussions, Calhoun, Adams, and Wirt, besides the President himself, were confident that the letter was not produced at any cabinet meeting ; and as neither Wirt nor Adams had ever heard of such a letter at all, while the latter had his diary to corroborate his statement, this must be considered conclusive. Adams's suggestion seems a reasonable one, that somewhere about the period of those discussions, while Crawford and Calhoun were alone with the President, the letter may have been produced, with substantially the scene which Crawford recalled from memory. Perhaps, however, Crawford first saw it after the "B. B." letter in the Philadelphia Aurora alluded to it. That both Calhoun and Crawford saw the letter between July and December, 1818, at least, seems certain; and Calhoun, having read the letter on its arrival, remembered its import sufficiently to remind the President that such a letter existed, though, doubtless, when received it had made little impression.

A letter from Crawford to Gallatin, written in 1819, is quite consistent with the facts of the Seminole deliberations, as reported in these pages, and may well offset some of his embellishments ten years later. "Now, in that deliberation," he says, "I avoided giving any opinion which could personally affect the general. I confined my opinions and reason entirely to the preservation of peace with Spain, and connected with it the preservation of the Constitution. There was, in fact, no difference of opinion in the cabinet except on the part of the Secretary of State, who, upon every question connected with the Floridas, has been excessively heterodoxical."—Gallatin's Works, 1819.

Seminole war, so insignificant as to the savages, yet so momentous in the quarrels to which it gave rise among civilized men, was destined to cast a long shadow down the pathway of American politics.

By the time Congress re-assembled in November, Andrew Jackson was of all Americans the man universally discussed. So rude was the shock given to republican susceptibilities by his exploits in Florida, whose outcome might yet be a European war, that the public mind was still bewildered ; many questioned the right, more the propriety of his acts ; but the course taken by our administration aided a lenient public judgment, while the shouts of Tennessee and the far west, proclaiming Jackson a genuine hero, the coming man, rolled over the Alleghanies, and mingled with the thundering surfs of the Atlantic. The general mass will quickly sympathize with him who has dared in the common cause ; nor in those days, while the bitterness of the late war lingered, was the American democracy likely to idolize the less one who embodied in himself those traits which awaken enthusiasm because he had executed two Britishers and two Red Stick chiefs with impartial contempt. An extraordinary man, indeed, had arisen at the West ; the story of his life was asked, his services at New Orleans were recalled ; and to become in this country the theme of national discussion compelling with so much public curiosity such genuine admiration, meant of necessity to be canvassed by the politicians for the Presidency.

Whatever subject occupies the national mind is likely to project itself, at the earliest opportunity, into the Congressional debates. To direct and to be directed in turn by public opinion comes always natural enough to legislators under our system ; but just at the present moment, when personal factions grew apace like weeds while party principles were dying out, when bitter rivalries, jostling ambitions, intrigues to overthrow one administration and bring in another, were bred out of the stagnant pool of national issues, the sudden apparition of a hero, standing among the people in glittering

state, must have inspired civilians of influence at the capital with a dark purpose. To censure Jackson, to drive him from the arena where they were competitors for the prize, to check the popular rally in his favor, and, moreover, in a measure, to embarrass the administration which seemed so nearly to sustain him, engaged, but as the event proved, in vain, the combined efforts of Crawford and Clay. With Crawford the restraining influence should have been loyalty to the administration under which he served; and this alone, perhaps; for to Jackson personally he owed nothing, since (to use his own words) the general had made war on him not less savage than on the savages themselves; * and besides there was the Rabun affair, in which, as a Georgian, he stood naturally with his own State. Clay, on the other hand, had already taken the chances of opposition to Monroe, while with Jackson all previous acquaintance on his part, though by no means intimate, was friendly. Clay's co-operation in this public assault upon Tennessee's favorite son and his own western compeer, though studiously dispassionate and with an effort to maintain social courtesies, cost him dearly, as he had never dreamed; for Jackson, stronger than ever after this ordeal, became Clay's implacable enemy. Monroe could be magnanimous; but Jackson never forgave unless convinced of error, and to him a foe in public was a foe in the private relations of life.

Jackson's scathing letters to Rabun, over the Chehaw massacre, had provoked many governors of the Southern States and the States rights men; hence, too, Virginia Republicans were offended with him. The *Richmond Enquirer*, edited by Ritchie, a shallow and conceited man who, though potent in Virginia, overrated his national influence and miscalculated the state of public feeling, stirred up a Congressional investigation, which, perhaps, would not otherwise have been undertaken; several influential Virginia members falling in with a scheme which promised them an easy popularity among their constituents and the country

* Crawford to Gallatin; Gallatin's Works, 1819.

a spicy sensation, without realizing how strongly the popular current ran in Jackson's favor, nor that the issue must necessarily be against the administration itself.* The business took shape in both Houses. In the Senate a select committee, with Lacock of Pennsylvania as chairman, took up the whole Seminole proceedings for investigation, sending for persons and papers, and examining members of General Jackson's staff. In the House Thomas M. Nelson, of Virginia, on behalf of the military committee, presented a majority report strongly condemnatory of the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister; the committee dividing, however, four to three, and a minority report, which was offered by Richard M. Johnson, justifying Jackson in the main, and concluding that he and his troops were entitled to the thanks of the country. Upon these two reports and in the popular branch of Congress, arose the great Seminole debate of the session. All standing places were crowded to suffocation with eager listeners, and for more than three weeks the discussion went on, to the practical exclusion of other business. 1819. Jan. 12.

The main ground of the opposition was well chosen; for all other possible errors of the Seminole campaign having been already rectified by the President, the hanging of Arbuthnot and shooting of Ambrister remained the most vulnerable act which stood unaltered. To rebuke Jackson in this respect might seem to honor the cause of humanity, and the dilemma of the administration consequent upon such a rebuke must be perplexing indeed. Must it not have been a singular spectacle, however, this of an American Congress undertaking that the Executive should make a reparation to England which England herself had not demanded? The Arbuthnot and Ambrister affair was truly novel in its present aspect; for, waiving the issue of actual and proven guilt on the part of the victims, which Adams had so eloquently and so plausibly maintained, the fundamental principle which Jackson had invoked to justify their execution was a

* See 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary; Monroe MSS.

startling one. Indeed, if this were sound, as the majority report argued, Lafayette and Kosciusko might have been hanged in the war of the Revolution had they fallen into British hands. Yet one so just as Washington had during that war consigned André to an ignominious death; and though to Americans Lafayette's person seemed scarcely less sacred than that of Washington himself, might not a British commander have dealt with him as Jackson did with Ambrister, had the marquis unfortunately been taken prisoner before our opportunity to retaliate and the actual declaration of war between England and France made the concession of belligerent rights necessary? International questions, furthermore, are determined not by abstract principle, but by the concrete facts; and the likening of those chivalric defenders of American freedom to two interlopers, who had secretly set loose the savage bloodhounds upon our borders, in order to aid speculative ventures of their own, might well have provoked a smile of contempt. The fate to which filibusters on this western continent expose themselves, and that by the same relentless process of a court-martial, has since been confirmed by the memorable examples of Walker at Truxillo and of the unhappy royal youth Maximilian in Mexico; while Great Britain, moreover, reaped the benefit of her own forbearance in the present instance by the freedom which it left her in later years to put down Irish raids and insurrections in which American citizens bore a part. The more dubious aspects of this case related, therefore, to the proof upon which Arbuthnot was convicted; to the manifest bias of the tribunal against both prisoners; to Jackson's reversal of the lighter sentence, pronounced after reconsideration upon Ambrister; to the pitiless severity which seemed to expose both victims to a predetermined sacrifice, without the shadow of that protection which delay or appeal to the supreme authority usually affords in such cases; and, above all, in the impressive circumstance that Jackson took upon himself the sole responsibility of spilling their blood on the soil of an unwilling neutral; capturing, arraigning, and, in fine, executing these

men in a foreign jurisdiction, where some might almost have styled him a filibuster himself.

That Jackson's defense in the premises did not proceed upon the broad ground of entire justification was obvious from the tone of many of the speeches now made in his favor; from expressions of the press and such private citizens as the sober Madison, that it would be well not to wound the feelings of this hero and his admirers;* and from the discreet silence officially maintained by the Executive on such points, while screening him unreservedly from censure and punishment. The popular belief which thus found expression was, that Jackson had on all occasions acted for his country's good, and that success had as often crowned his efforts. The main question being, then, whether to disapprove the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister, one of the speakers put the defense not inaptly when he pronounced those inflictions "a wrong mode of doing a right thing;" while Poindexter, of Mississippi, drew tears from his auditors by allusions to Miltiades and Belisarius, and by making the touching appeal, by way of peroration, whether gratitude or ingratitude should be awarded to the defender of his country. This talented orator and representative from the southwest, who had watched at the cradle of a new State to receive the meed of its lasting gratitude, made the most impressive speech against the main resolution, though Richard M. Johnson, Holmes, Tallmadge of New York, Hugh Nelson, and Philip Barbour were prominent on the same side. Yet the strongest arguments in Jackson's defence were directed to avoiding a pointed discussion, on the plea that the Executive ought not to be inculpated with Europe, and trusting either to the meritorious claims of an old hero, or his military responsibility to the President and commander-in-chief, for evading the proposed censure by the House; Poindexter adroitly putting forward, from a

* See Niles's Register and other newspapers of the day; Madison's Works, 1819.

careful study of the voluminous documents, all the points which told in Jackson's favor. Lowndes and Harrison, in the tone of partial condemnation, and Cobb of Georgia, Clay, Mercer, Storrs of New York, and Tyler of Virginia, who fully supported the resolution of censure, were speakers on the other side. Clay's speech, which conceded the guilt of Arbuthnot and Ambrister, but imputed the cause of the Seminole war to Jackson's Creek treaty of 1814, was of these the most remarkable; and of all the criticisms passed upon his conduct, Jackson most resented the invidious comparison made by this eloquent speaker in General Harrison's favor, while alluding to Jackson's summary execution of the two Indian chiefs at St. Mark's, and the peroration at the close, which depicted, in that vivid imagery of which Clay was a master, the impending danger that liberty in this republic would be overthrown by military chieftains. Often in after years had Clay reason to deplore the popular fascination which these same military chieftains exert even while liberty lasts.

To the resolution of censure proposed by the military committee others had been added, all of which, however, were lost; for on the final vote following this long debate the House stood for disapproving the execution of Arbuthnot and Ambrister substantially 62 to 108, and for disapproving the seizure of Pensacola, 70 to 100. At every point in brief Jackson routed his enemies.*

1819. Feb. 8.

To this division of the House in concurrence with the committee of the whole, which registered the votes of two destined Presidents and one Vice-President, besides Clay, who was more than their peer, and other statesmen of eminence, may be traced new national affiliations which out of the decomposing elements of Jefferson's republican party produced, as years elapsed, new combinations known

* Annals of Congress, Benton's Abridgment. According to an analysis of the test votes in 16 Niles's Register, p. 61, about 100 Republicans, 6 Federalists, and 2 of doubtful politics voted in Jackson's favor; and 29 Republicans, 31 Federalists, and 2 of doubtful politics voted to censure.

as Jacksonites and anti-Jacksonites, or, in their perfected union, Democrats and Whigs. External pressure not less than the present affinity forced these combinations; for as Jackson, when a political dictator, showed that he never forgot who of these men voted on the one side or the other, that circumstance decided many a one in his later choice of a party. Hastening from Nashville upon the hint of a coalition in Congress to crush him, the hawk-eyed warrior made his abode at Washington as long as his reputation remained in jeopardy, vehement and excited while the debate progressed; finding spleen while this one assailed and clear logic where that one defended him; conferring constantly with friends and partisans; making verbal suggestions and exhibiting papers. Paying his respects to the President on his arrival, Jackson made the personal acquaintance of Adams, whose tongue and pen had done him such brilliant service, and, arm in arm with Calhoun, who worked upon Senate and House for his acquittal, paced Pennsylvania Avenue with quick step and throbbing heart. He declined civilities and omitted visits on principle, pending the decision of the affair,* nor did he consider it delicate to enter Congress Hall while the discussion was pending. No sooner, however, had the House vote announced a refusal to censure than, accepting spontaneous invitations which had been sent him to visit Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, he started on a tour of glory to those cities, more talked of, more truly a victor, and in consequence more generally exciting public curiosity than ever. When he appeared on the street a crowd would gather to gaze on him, the boldest of them grasping him by the hand or blessing him with honest fervor. These seaboard ovations being chiefly military or municipal, their flavor was coarse and strong; and if the aristocracy barred its doors and indulged in squibs or curses, there remained, at least, the balls and banquets of the democracy, the hearty effusions of the unlearned and the plaudits of the multitude,

Jan. 23.

* See 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819.

all of which Jackson acknowledged with a vehemence which bespoke a sympathetic and rugged nature unusual among public men, and freshened the atmosphere. Irishmen came forward to welcome one of Celtic blood like themselves. At New York the common council voted him the freedom of the city in a gold snuff-box; and in this city a ball and supper given on the 22d of February, which he attended without, fortunately, being called upon for a birth-day tribute, commemorated the "twin glories of Yorktown and New Orleans." Indeed as the "savior of the south," and the "man of Orleans," Jackson's laurels were in such popular estimate as unfading as those of Washington himself.

It was during this northern tour that Jackson's dispute with General Scott, to which allusion has already been made,* was first disclosed to the public; manuscript copies of some of the letters which had passed between them being circulated about by Jackson's friends, as though to taunt an opponent with showing the white feather, or, perhaps, exhibit specimens of their favorite's racy composition. Scott, by an evasion of department orders which forbade the newspaper exposure of quarrels between officers of the army, soon issued a pamphlet completing the correspondence by way of vindicating his own honor. The New York press, as might be expected, made much of the quarrel; but neither general challenged the other, and in after years the feud healed over.

One indiscretion Scott had committed, in dropping a suspicion that De Witt Clinton was the anonymous informant of Jackson, who had stirred up this controversy. When, however, Scott's letter appeared, Clinton stoutly denied the imputation, and Scott made honorable amends. The governor was much given to political intrigue; and Scott's impression had been that Clinton had tried in an underhand way to widen the breach between Jackson and the War Department, in the hope of attaching to himself the

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* *Supra*, p. 64.

former's western support for the next Presidency. In fact courtesies now passed between Clinton and Jackson, which annoyed the jealous Van Buren faction, and alarmed Crawford, who was watching the position from the seat of government with eager gaze.* At a civic feast, given in New York, where Van Buren and Tammany were potent, Jackson volunteered the health of De Witt Clinton; an innocent blunder on his part, which disconcerted the company, and afforded the wits of the town some sport.†

This was the first time Jackson had ever seen the metropolis of New York; nor had he visited Philadelphia since his eelskin queue and coarse dress and manners offended the proprieties of our temporary capital. He had changed with the times. Notwithstanding the eccentric aspects of the present tour, the evident relish with which he drank in the dew of adulation, his sensitiveness to affront, his disposition to wear, as the phrase goes, his heart upon his sleeve, the hero of New Orleans and Pensacola left alike upon the curious and the admiring, upon those prejudiced scarcely less than those predisposed in his favor,—upon all, in fact, in three leading cities, who saw him, except the bitterly contemptuous,—a marked impression in his favor. The young backwoodsman had grown into a Tennessee gentleman of independent fortune, who wore well in public the dignity of a popular hero. In any assemblage he would be pointed out as a remarkable man the moment he was seen. Instead of a rough ranger of murderous aspect, whose conversation was interlarded with fierce imprecations and barbarous solecisms, appeared an elderly personage, with kind but penetrating blue eyes, narrow face, and high forehead, termi-

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* Gallatin's Works, 1819; Crawford to Gallatin.

† See "Croaker," of the Evening Post (Drake & Halleck, cited in 2 Parton's Jackson), who imagines the political magnates consulting together, after Jackson left the company, as to the best means of parrying the luckless stroke. Croaker's rhyming witticisms afford a fair sample of the ridicule which Jackson's tour encountered in the best society, so to speak, of the metropolis:

> "Dear general, though you swallow all,
> I must confess it sickens me," etc.

nating in bushy hair, now turning gray; a man of charming and unaffected manners, intelligent, susceptible to whatever influence was lofty and refining, whose own conversation was full of original and striking terms of expression, and whose fresh unconventional modes in thought and action made him appear the more wholesome. Now and in after years there was distinction and even elegance in his bearing, whenever he chose to assume that port; so that even British travellers owned their agreeable surprise in the man who had hanged Arbuthnot and shot Ambrister. And such was his chivalrous deference to the fair sex—for Jackson was tender in his love of women and children—that they were often enthusiastic in his praise. All this, however, afforded but the softer aspect of a singularly formed character; for Jackson was of tough fibre and violent passions,—one who might appear, under favorable aspects, gentler, fresher, and more frank by far than he really was.

Meantime Lacock's committee had presented in the Senate a report embodying the results of their investigation. It reflected with great severity upon Jackson's conduct in the Seminole war, making strictures against him on every point, from raising troops on his own call at Nashville, before he set out, instead of through the State Executive, to issuing, after his return, that order which conditionally authorized Gaines to seize St. Augustine; and, in fine, charging him with high-handed conduct, lawlessness, and the predetermined invasion of the Spanish dominions. Jackson, upon his return to the capital, was furious and even vociferous over this report, as the rumor went.* The ful-

Feb. 24.

* See 6 Hildreth, 656, alluding to Lacock's statement that the General threatened personal vengeance, even to cutting off the ears of some of the offending senators, an example freely imitated by some of Jackson's suite. These imputations were, however, partially denied by Jackson at a later date. See 2 Parton's Jackson.

King, of New York, and Eaton, of Tennessee, of the Senate committee, were opposed to the Lacock report, which they thought defamatory. From this committee Forsyth had resigned, pending the investigation, and Eppes was appointed in his place. Forsyth preceded Lacock as chairman during the investigation. 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary.

mination was harmless, however, for the Senate did nothing beyond ordering the document printed just before the final adjournment; and by the 9th of March the general with his suite left Washington for Tennessee, to be welcomed home with loud huzzas. His formal response to the Lacock report, expressed in subdued language, was sent in to the succeeding Congress, the Legislature of Tennessee having passed resolutions, meanwhile, sustaining Jackson and Gaines in the Seminole war, and voting to each a sword.

Thus did the Seminole controversy, as prolonged in our legislature, lift a rising citizen of the West into a prominence so great as to render him formidable to those civilians whose bent had been to destroy him. To the prowess of arms in his country's service was added in his favor the reaction of an unsuccessful persecution; and though Jackson himself laughed at the idea of his standing for the Presidency when his intimates whispered the plans they were laying,—for hitherto they who had filled the place of Chief Executive were gentlemen by breeding, well trained to civil pursuits, and to such our voters still inclined,—yet the Eastern democracy, conscious of its growing strength, had already begun searching for some honest, fearless, incorruptible, and patriotic citizen of plain manners who might set foot upon Congressional caucus and monopoly, and become the people's candidate and the people's President in a wider sense than had ever yet been realized. Their lantern was held up to the Mississippi Valley as though the man had been discovered. As for those with whom Jackson was henceforth worthy to rank as competitor, he himself concealing his new ambition, Clay tried in vain to push the Seminole contest aside as a passing episode, while Crawford, hardly stifling his own chagrin, persuaded his friends that the deep interest of the President was all that had saved the general from the censure of both houses.*

In the heat of the Seminole debate, it seemed to those in

* See Crawford to Gallatin, 1819, Gallatin's Works.

the President's confidence that the enemies of his Spanish policy were striving to thwart, through the legislature, the new treaty negotiations in progress; and all the more in consequence did the administration determine to forestall their plans and carry its own point. Jackson was a powerful mediator in procuring the cession of the Floridas; or such, at least, it proved under the clever turn given to his acts, so that the mediation with Spain reached soon a happy issue. A treaty was signed by Adams and Onis, on the part of their respective governments, which purported to complete a transfer of the provinces; the Spanish minister, whom Adams describes as calm, wily, always commanding his temper, but cold and haughty, being, however, represented in most of the conferences by the French minister, De Neuville, whose humane disposition and amiable flightiness afforded a striking contrast. As the consideration agreed upon, the United States renounced the various outstanding American spoliation claims against Spain, for the satisfaction of which our government agreed to pay to the claimants $5,000,000. The Louisiana boundary, as fixed by this treaty, was of much consequence. Previous disputes were compromised by running a line defined by the Sabine, Red, and Arkansas rivers, up to the forty-second degree of north latitude, and along that degree to the Pacific. This treaty, concluded at Washington on the same birthday anFeb. 22. niversary which Jackson's friends were turning to his glory in New York, the Senate promptly and unanimously ratified; and Congress, expecting a like ratification by the Cortes, passed an act before its final adjournment which authorized the President to take possession of the ceded territory and establish there a temporary government.* Forsyth, lately of the House, but now a Senator, was appointed minister to Spain, and harmony with that power seemed at length fully restored.†

* Act March 3, 1819.

† According to Adams, Forsyth had given annoyance to the administration by showing an inveterate dislike to Jackson while serving in the Seminole Committee of the Senate; but his appointment to Spain was in

This peaceful acquisition of the Floridas, which now awaited only the royal sanction of Spain to be completed, was of itself a grand and sufficient object for negotiation. But the limits here set to the Louisiana domain could hardly give permanent satisfaction to the American people. Had the geography and mineral resources of the Rocky Mountains been better explored at this date, the boundary-line would not have wavered so greatly about the rich bowels of Colorado. More instantly apparent, however, was the sacrifice on our part in moving the southwestern boundary-line from the Rio del Norte to the Sabine, by way of abating all pretensions on our part to Texas as comprised within the original territory ceded by Napoleon. From this relinquishment of a province which already tempted invasion, Adams anticipated trouble; but his effort to push the line farther westward than the Sabine was not supported by the administration, and Jackson, whom he consulted verbally at the President's request, thought our people would, on the whole, be satisfied to surrender Texas, since they had gained the Floridas.* But both Adams and Jackson agreed that the adversaries of the administration would make a handle of this concession; and, indeed, scarcely were the terms of the treaty known before symptoms of such a disposition appeared.

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pursuance of a previous understanding with the Executive. 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819.

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary, February 1, 1819. Jackson, in later years, when the acquisition of Texas had become a strong purpose with his party, asseverated that he had never given such an opinion. But when the mood changed, the general's memory more than once proved treacherous, while the positiveness with which he asserted was always the same; and upon this issue, the Diary, with its dispassionate and contemporaneous statement of fact, confronts him boldly, together with the correspondence of Jackson and Monroe in 1819–20. See Monroe MSS. It has been asserted sometimes that Jackson was far away from the Capital at the date referred to, and could not have been personally consulted; but, as we have seen, he was unquestionably there, and under circumstances making Monroe's courtesy peculiarly acceptable to him.

Monroe presently revealed to intimate friends the cause of his indisposition to press at this time for the immediate cession of Texas. His reasons were prudential, his real desire being to allay sectional irritation; for the jealousy, or rather humanity, of the North, was, in view of the constant aggrandizement of national territory given over to the propagation of slave labor, breaking into open discontent. He did not view the annexation of Texas as a mere question between the United States and Spain, or between these powers and the Spanish colonies; for to his mind the decision of boundaries rested ultimately with ourselves, and sooner or later Spain would be expelled from this continent, no European power possibly preventing it. But the difficulty was altogether an internal one, affecting the permanency of this Union, and of the most distressing and dangerous nature.† Our early negotiation of 1785–86 with the minister of Spain for shutting up the mouth of the Mississippi, was, as Monroe and other southern delegates of the Continental Congress at the time construed it, not so much a question of Spanish pretensions as of turning those pretensions so as to secure the permanent dominion of the Union to the eastern section. At that time the American Confederacy consisted of eight navigating and commercial States, and of five which cultivated slave products. Jay, who directed the negotiations, would have bound New York in friendly alliance with New England; and the check of western colonization, if not a complete dismemberment of the Union by the Alleghanies, was the anticipated result of putting the throat of the Mississippi and her tributaries within the grasp of a foreign monarch. All this, whether designed in truth by the eastern statesmen, or imagined by Virginia in her maternal anxiety for Kentucky, then an embryo State, was averted; the Mississippi and its tributaries were left open to American navigation, the wilds beyond the Alleghanies drew over an Atlantic population, new States bloomed on the parent

* See Monroe MSS., May, 1820, Monroe's letters to Jefferson and Jackson.

stalk, and, in process of time, the Mississippi itself ceased to be our western barrier, standing at length in the centre of our map like some sturdy oak, rooted at the Gulf, and extending its wide-spreading branches over a vast expanse of prosperous States and advancing Territories.

Our westward step had hitherto been buoyant. The Mississippi River was ours, with all the territory contiguous to its waters. This onward march to continental empire had been observed with profound regret, if not alarm, by those who had sought to keep the sceptre at the East, and by the inheritors of their precepts; it had been impelled by causes which they could not control. But Pickering, Quincy, and others among the old-school Federalists had lifted their voices in dissent when Louisiana, with its Latin and un-Protestant population, fell into the lap of the Union; nor had the Hartford Convention failed to specify the acquisition of new territory and new States, unforeseen when the bonds of Union were entered into, as a New England and Puritan grievance. The annexation of Florida, now to take place, would be acceptable to the public mind, at this more advanced stage of political development; we had long wished and worked to procure it by a peaceful cession; but how differently might be regarded the further incorporation of an immense Spanish province, to which scarcely the pretence of a legal claim had been made heretofore on our behalf, much less the national expression of a wish to add it to an area already extensive enough to make thoughtful men anxious about the permanence of the American Union.

For there was enough to make an administration, devoted to the best welfare of the whole Union, solicitous at the present moment, in the startling fact, only too plainly revealed by the Missouri debates at the session just closing, that the old equilibrium, hitherto maintained between slavery and freedom in the Territories, had been lost, and the whole stupendous fabric of a Union upon compromise swung dizzily in mid-air. To cast Texas into the scale of the South, a province large enough to furnish at least five States of the

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area of New York, all doomed most probably to slavery, might, with Florida already conceded to the same section, not only expose the administration to the charge of subserving southern ambition, but inflame the northern mind to a just resistance, and perhaps provoke civil war and disunion.

That Monroe on this point decided wisely and with a just conception of the gathering difficulties which beset the course of this republic while freedom and slavery contended for the mastery, our later history attests, beside the sectional strife which had broken out over the administration of Missouri, and to which our immediate narrative must be confined. That strife, arousing for two long years passions which had long lain dormant, was initiated, fought, and as most fondly believed, finally composed by a compromise. We have seen that, while Congress in constitutional theory had a right to legislate at discretion respecting the Territories belonging to the United States, and consequently to prohibit slavery, as well as polygamy or pagan idolatry in any part of them, the constant practice, on the other hand, had been to leave the fate of this institution to accident, or rather to accept the conditions, whether anti-slavery or pro-slavery, which the older States ceding such territory might see fit to impose; a practice ere this so inveterate that phrases in the treaty of 1803 with Napoleon were now becoming perverted from their true meaning by many into a perpetual sanction of slavery within the Louisiana purchase, or, at all events, so as to create a perpetual fetter upon the discretion of Congress to build up free republics in that broad domain. Tacitly, and upon an admitted loyalty to the principle of mutual concession which cemented North and South together, rather than by any express compact which freemen might blush to subscribe the new States who had been voted since 1789 into the original sisterhood, were permitted to enter, one after another, stamped in the forehead with the alternate birthmarks slavery and freedom, until in this Fifteenth Congress appeared twenty States in all, half of them northern, half southern in point of sympathies and interest. The rapidity with which the northern and anti-

slavery States were growing in wealth and numbers might excite envy on one side. On the other was the three-fifths representation of slaves in the House, which the Constitution permitted; but in the Senate the balance of political power hung evenly.

The earliest of new States admitted into the Union were Kentucky and Vermont; the sixth and seventh Indiana and Mississippi. These last almost simultaneously found representation in the Fifteenth Congress; and of them Indiana, not without an internal struggle, held steadfastly to the fundamental Ordinance of 1787 under which her soil was settled, having adopted a free State constitution in June, 1816; Mississippi, which followed on the slave side, agreeing upon a constitution, in August, 1817, which the new Congress, at its earliest opportunity after assembling, pronounced republican in form, and satisfactory.* Next in order Illinois and Alabama, the one anti-slavery, the other pro-slavery, knocked for admission. Their respective claims came before this same Fifteenth Congress. As to Illinois an enabling act was passed at the first session † in pursuance of which a convention assembled at Kaskaskia, on the 26th of August, and, all the requisite formalities having been observed, the admission of a new free State was proclaimed by the following December.‡ All the residue of that consecrated northwest area had already been detached for government as the territory of Michigan. Scarcely, however, had this new free State seemed about to disturb the national equipoise, when, as in the case of Indiana and Mississippi, the slave interest was found ready to restore it. On a memorial from the legislature of the Alabama territory a bill was at once reported, which authorized the people to form a State government and procure admission after the usual

1818.

1818. Dec.

* Indiana was admitted as a full State by joint resolution of the preceding Congress, December 10, 1816. The joint resolution for the admission of Mississippi took effect December 11, 1817.

† Act April 18, 1818.

‡ Joint resolution December 3, 1817.

terms. This bill passed to be enacted before the first session closed; * and following compliance with its provisions and the final sanction by Congress, of which no doubt existed, this Union by another year would consist of twenty-two States, half slave and half free, neither section preponderating in influence.

But now appeared a disturbance of this sectional equilibrium which lovers of the Union had been taught to believe essential to the general happiness as well as harmony. For on the self-same day that the Alabama bill was reported to the Senate, a memorial from the legislature of Missouri territory to form a constitution and State government was laid before the House. This was the first threatened turn of the scales as between slavery and freedom; the first break in the order of alternate admission. Congress and the American people were forced to face, as never before, the grave responsibilities which attached to the possession of a domain beyond the Mississippi, larger than the whole original Union and rapidly settling, of which in real truth the national title came unembarrassed, but where northern and southern ideas were already in open collision. Louisiana, to be sure, had been immediately admitted as a State with its dense foreign and native population already committed to slavery, to work out the social problem as it might; but for Missouri, for all other States henceforth to be erected out of this immense cession, design not chance should prescribe a scheme. What then should be the design? The Missouri and Mississippi confluence, about which swarmed the chief population of this region, stood above the line of freedom as established in the northwest territory by the Ohio river, though the southern limits of the proposed State, 36° 30′, would bring it on a line with the southern boundary of Virginia and Kentucky. Missouri, then, was physically of doubtful status; and while most territorial settlers and the old French inhabitants in-

Dec. 18.

* Act March 2, 1819.

clined to the soft indolence of caste, in accordance with their antecedents, the conscience and the jealousy of the north was roused to assert that for territory purchased by the nation, the nation should prescribe the social institutions, and those institutions ought, as by God's law, to be free.

After an earnest debate during this winter, the House, whose representation gave freedom the pre-eminence, accordingly annexed a restriction to the enabling act for Missouri's admission, which forbade the further introduction of slaves, and promised freedom to the children of those already there.* The Senate, however, whose complexion was different, passed the Missouri bill with the anti-slavery restriction stricken out; and in the disagreement which ensued the bill was lost.

1819. Feb.

March.

The shock of this first encounter had been unexpected; and the discomfited champions of slave propagation withdrew, to renew the battle, with plans more skillfully laid, in the Sixteenth Congress. To the assembling of that Congress and the renewal of the Missouri debate we shall conveniently defer the whole narrative of this discussion, not however without mentioning James Tallmadge of New York, the mover of the restriction. His torch kindled this great conflagration. A young man of seemingly frail health but of burning eloquence and deep conviction, his national service was embraced in a single term; for, never before in Congress, he declined a re-election and never served again. His crowded hour here was one of glorious life; and history must marvel that, living more than thirty years longer, he blew one loud, shivering bugle blast and then passed out, to be heard no more.

As preliminary to the admission of Missouri a bill was introduced which passed both Houses at this session, establishing a separate territorial government for the portion of Missouri territory lying south of 36° 30′, to be known as

* See Annals of Congress. The decisive vote stood on this amendment 87 to 76; and the bill passed to a third reading as amended by 97 to 56.

Arkansas. To this bill sundry anti-slavery amendments were offered in the House, but failed of adoption. The bearing of this advantage in favor of the South will be seen when the Missouri controversy is resumed.*

A few miscellaneous measures of the Fifteenth Congress remain for mention. By an act of the first session the staff of the army was reorganized on a plan which increased the efficiency, while it reduced the expense of the service.† The offices of surgeon-general, quartermaster-general, and commissary-general were so established as to enable their headquarters to be permanently located at the seat of government. By instituting these and other reforms which brought new order and simplicity into the management of the War Department, Calhoun, who had entered the cabinet with only the fame of a logician, proved himself competent to organize and administer as well. Those envious of his rising fame might award the chief praise to General Brown, his judicious military adviser; but the essence of a sound direction of civil affairs consists in considering well the best advice, and then assuming the responsibility of acting upon it. As himself a counsellor, Calhoun proved discreet and faithful to the President who had chosen him, besides managing finely the affairs specially committed to him.‡

Squadrons of the navy were now maintained in the Mediterranean and about the Gulf of Mexico, as appeared needful in the interest of American commerce. This favorite arm of our service was gradually increasing its equipment to the full measure of a generous national appropriation. Under a joint resolution of the second session, naval vessels

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* See act March 2, 1819, Statues at Large, giving the name "Arkansaw." This Arkansas territory was much more extensive than the present State of Arkansas, in its westward direction.

† Act April 14, 1818.

‡ See on the point of Calhoun's efficiency as Secretary of War, Von Holst's Calhoun. John Quincy Adams spoke in high praise of Calhoun at first, but changed his tone to disparagement after their political alienation.—*Cf.* Diary, 1819, 1822.

of the United States newly built were to be named, ships-of-the-line after the States, frigates after the rivers, and sloops-of-war after the chief cities and towns.*

The long-agitated compensation of members of Congress, whose summary increase in 1816 had provoked such odium as to cause its repeal, was now fixed, where it long remained, at a per diem of eight dollars, together with an allowance of mileage in favor of those who travelled from a distance; † the salary list was revised; ‡ and it was agreed that each House should choose its own public printer.§ This Congress gave, moreover, a distracted attention to war claims, which, wholly unequal in merit, came pouring in from all quarters, a promiscuous mass, impelled by the too flattering report of public finances. The nation's swelling gratitude to those who had battled in its defence found liberal expression, and particularly in the legislation of 1818. Arrearages were made up, volunteer companies relieved; to the war of 1812 were extended the benefits of an earlier navy pension act; payment of the expenses of militia marching to the place of rendezvous was ordered; and all State claims arising out of the late war, except those of Massachusetts and Connecticut, were generously treated. Tardy honors in the shape of a sword, medals, and a resolution of thanks, were voted to the officers and men who served in the Harrison campaign, two of the chief heroes being themselves members of the House.‖

Two measures of the first session left a lasting national impression. One, in place of the old invalid pension, from which some crippled veterans had received a small pittance, granted to all survivors of the Revolution who had served at least nine months in the Continental army or navy, and could prove themselves to be in need of assistance, a stated annuity. All military pension acts founded upon past ser-

* Joint resolution, March 3, 1819.
† Act January 22, 1818.
‡ Acts April 20, 1818; Feb. 20, 1819.
§ Resolution March 3, 1819.
‖ See various acts: April 16, 1818, April 20, 1818.

vice underestimate the cost involved in the national generosity. Here, however, the provision seemed not wholly gratuitous, but a just recompense rather to public creditors in their helpless old age who had been forced, when discharged from the service, to take their pay in depreciated paper.* The other measure was an act which, by a happy modification of the older pattern, regulated the national flag, so that after July 4, 1818, it should consist of the thirteen alternate red and white stripes, emblematical of our origin and independent existence; with a union composed of white stars in a blue field, as many in number as the existing States, and a star to be added hereafter for every new State, on the 4th of July next succeeding its admission.† The form of our flag originally selected in 1777 regarded only the old thirteen States; nor was the act of 1794 well matured for symbolizing existing States, whose number was so rapidly increasing.

In these last-mentioned measures might be felt the new and eager throb of an American sentiment, both patriotic and national. Never did the heart of this Union pulsate more strongly than during the Congressional round we have described, though the jarring dissensions of a second session marred the earlier harmony. Proud in our annals was the year 1818, when the whole nation felt itself soaring upward in a new atmosphere, exhilarated and bold, like an eagle loosened from confinement. Gratitude and confidence were the animating impulses of those halcyon days. The new flag of the United States, hoisted for the first time over the chamber of the assembled representatives at Washington, ‡ with its twenty stars so disposed as to form one great star in the centre of the azure field, while the long red and white stripes danced in the breeze, supplied a parable. That spangled host, soon to be increased in number, spoke of a Union to be progressive and

1818. April 13.

* Act March 18, 1818.
† Act April 4, 1818.
‡ See 14 Niles's Register, 1818.

perpetual, while the thirteen stripes recalled founders whose memory must ever be cherished. Venerable sires of the Revolution who had lived to witness the blessings enjoyed by this ample posterity; how gratefully were you named on the anniversary of independence. There were John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, names linked inseparably together by posterity, their old rivalries forgotten, William Ellery, William Floyd, Charles Carroll,—these were the last surviving signers of the Declaration. Of general officers who had taken part in the great struggle of the colonies, only three, except for Lafayette, remained, namely, Stark, St. Clair, and Huntington. Huntington died during the autumn, and to the other two, feeble and needy, Congress afforded relief with filial piety.* With regretful if tardy pomp the remains of General Montgomery were by order of the New York legislature brought from the heights of Quebec, where they had reposed for more than forty years; and the original coffin, still well preserved, was enclosed in a costly casket of mahogany, and deposited beneath the mural tablet which a Continental Congress had in 1776 erected in New York City to commemorate his worth.† These, too, were the days when Trumbull's historical painting of the Declaration, publicly exhibited in our chief cities, its destined niche not being yet ready for its reception at the Capitol, drew many of the American youth, who gazed with awe upon the solemn canvas, and, with the help of the key, pointed out illustrious signers whose names, but not their figures, had been familiar. Gratitude for the past appeared to the living the surest pledge that they themselves would not be forgotten; and surely they were grateful.

1818. July 6.

* St. Clair had an old claim settled by Congress, and, like Stark, received a pension of $60 a month, which, however, he did not live long to enjoy. His unfortunate errors, military and civil, since the Revolution, which prejudiced his demands, have already been noticed. See vol. i, 153, 191, 216; vol. ii, 43. For these he had paid dearly and the public resentment towards him gradually softened. Pennsylvania had granted him a pension already.

† This tablet, placed on the Broadway front of St. Paul's Church is still visible to the surging crowd which sweeps by the iron fence at this busy corner.

Tenderly and sacredly, however, as our Revolutionary sires were now treated by those whose career emblazons the annals of 1812, and whose anxiety to wipe away the last stain of filial reproach appeared so manifest, posterity has not in its turn rendered to them such decent offices. Whatever the merits of those who conducted the second struggle of American Independence, and the undoubted service they rendered in severing this country from Europe, they never reached the same high plane of æsthetic honors. The poverty of subjects for the artist's pencil, which essays in vain to poetize frigates fighting a duel in mid-ocean, or long ranks resting their rifles upon cotton breastworks, may in part account for this; and of the few scenes which, well depicted, ought to stir the depths of a loyal heart, Perry's victory alone has yet been attempted with anything approaching success. A weightier explanation is found in the levelling effect of our modern institutions and the development of a national temperament less susceptible than formerly to patriotic impressions; moreover, in the long-divided sentiment which has prevailed among Americans themselves respecting the justifying causes of this second war, and as to whether the United States had really gained by it. That the war was justifiable on principle and advantageous in fact,—crowned, indeed, with blessings far greater than immediately appeared, and only to be reproved as rashly undertaken,—history must admit; nevertheless, the first struggle of 1776 burns with more of the celestial fire, nor has America ever produced but one commander, who, like Washington, embodied the cause for which he fought.

With this new buoyancy of republican and new-world ideas, this spontaneous impulse given to our national character, there mingled somewhat of a lofty and pitying scorn for Europe and the old-world institutions. Our American people felt that they had a country of their own; and proudly did they boast of that country at this moment, as they drew unflattering comparisons. What would become of exhausted and bankrupt Europe, now waking from the dream of imperialism, its rulers and people alike beggared and hastening to

decay, its restored monarchs searching for the gew-gaws of infallibility, the legitimate scions of the aristocracy rearing illegimate offspring? Ferdinand was a despot without resources, the royal Bourbons of France puppets of an armed alliance who pulled the wires, the acting King of England a drunkard and libertine, and its actual one a hopeless imbecile. The age of barbarism had commenced in the Old World, and some master-spirit would end it. But here, in the New World, the sovereign people, fearing neither priestcraft nor kingcraft, made equal laws and lived by them. Those laws appealed to the whole human race in the spirit of universal philanthropy. If the Indian remained an outcast and the negro a slave, their fate, nevertheless, could not involve that of our glorious inheritance. Here, on freedom's natal day, confusion to tyrants was the toast; success, moreover, to our South American brethren-in-arms, and to Bolivar, just emerging from exile to be their great deliverer. Happy was America, no longer shackled, no longer in superstitious bondage. Here on these shores was found the Elysium for the oppressed of all climes, liberty's safe harbor, the land of peace and plenty.

SECTION II.

PERIOD OF SIXTEENTH CONGRESS.

March 4, 1819—March 3, 1821.

Republics feel the common vicissitudes of joy and despondency, and widely, too, inasmuch as the responsibilities and ambitions of civil existence are shared by all. To the buoyant and impetuous confidence which has just been described, culminating in the summer of 1818, quickly succeeded depression and a sudden sinking of the heart; the popular mood changed; more violent passions were aroused. But this storm was of short continuance, and at the close of the period we now enter upon, the warm sun broke out once more.

This reaction began near the close of the preceding Congress, when, as we have seen, angry discussions had begun to engage its attention. There was one controversy, however, — namely, over the United States Bank and a growing monetary pressure in the community, — to which allusion has not been made, for the reason that corporate mismanagement and the public distress did not produce a panic until after the final adjournment.

To go back a brief space. The financial prosperity of the country, upon which the repeal of the internal taxes was based, proved a year later not a little delusive; for the Secretary of the Treasury was forced to admit in his second annual report that the public receipts had greatly fallen off, not as to the abolished tax alone, but in the permanent item of customs. There had come, furthermore, a great pressure upon the community: banks calling in their loans, and compelling their debtors by legal process. This latter phenomenon might be partially explained. There had been a drainage of precious metals to the East Indies and a failure of the Spanish American mines. But the root of the evil lay deeper. Commerce with the East Indies, China, and elsewhere, manufactures, business in general had been overdone; stimulated, no doubt, by the excessive paper issues of our banks during the suspension of specie payments, and by the impulse, natural on the first dawning of peace, to develop old channels of profit, which, under the changed relations of Europe and America, must have become closed forever to us. Credit collapsed in consequence, and the scramble for self-preservation commenced.

1818.

After all the boasted return to specie payments since the war, resumption, outside of New England, and particularly in States west of the mountains, had as yet been scarcely more than nominal, and hundreds of suits were at length pending in the courts against individuals on behalf of banks whose own dishonored promises to pay were selling in the market at quoted rates below par. Imprisonment for debt was still the ultimate recourse of creditors, aside from such

imperfect relief as a local insolvent law might afford; and hence private ruin dragged down the debtor's near relations and friends, whose succor from ignominious punishment was an element of heartless calculation. But who could imprison that soulless corporation who of all creditors was remorseless?

Much of the present distress was attributable to the careless and indiscriminating extension of banking facilities during and since the war. Banks had been chartered of late years,—in New York, for instance,—not at the populous centres alone, as formerly, but in small towns. The depreciated notes of the country banks found their way to the large commercial centres, where they were bought up by speculators and brokers, who awaited some favorable opportunity of presenting a sheaf of them for payment at the distant counter.* The facilities of exchange at first created soon began to disappear, for the worse bills crowded the better out of circulation. To the Pennsylvania litter of forty banks and honest Snyder's ineffectual veto we have elsewhere alluded.† West of the Alleghanies the condition was still more deplorable. The legislature of Kentucky had led the way to reckless repudiation by chartering, in 1817, thirty-nine new banks, in addition to a State Bank with its fourteen branches already existing, all of which were allowed to go into operation and make discounts without a specie basis; and in the end this financial error nearly involved the State in a civil revolution.

As may be imagined, the pressure of dishonored local banks upon their customers, to which we have alluded, was not wholly voluntary. The flood of paper money, created during the war and while specie payments remained suspended, had debauched trade and those who pursued it. Nominal prices had risen to exaggerated figures, and such for a season were the facilities for credit that

* See joint committee report, New York Legislature, 15 Niles's Register.

† *Supra*, vol. ii, p. 398.

men were seduced into ruinous enterprises. Paper banks propped up the mischief. Such was the condition of things while States had their own way, which the new Bank of the United States had been designed to correct; and now its incubus was felt so suddenly and so heavily as to give color to the surmise that it was either in straits or was bent on ruining the State banks. Oppression by this giant institution, which held much of the State bank paper, afforded excuse for the local oppression which now afforded such general alarm. The Bank of the United States first impaired public confidence by a rule announced in August, 1818, which curtailed former facilities by making its notes receivable only at the bank or branch issuing them. Its stock instantly fell from 160 to 120. To this succeeded a call by the national bank upon local institutions for the payment of their balances; and now a panic ensued, followed in the autumn by a general stoppage of State banks in the Ohio valley and a quick decline of prices in the leading commodities.

1818. August.

Deferring to the popular clamor which bred injurious rumors, the Fifteenth Congress had, among the first proceedings at its second session, ordered an investigation of the Bank of the United States. John C. Spencer, of New York, a rising young lawyer in the house, offered a resolution, which authorized the appointment of a committee fully empowered to send for persons and papers; and serving as chairman, he nearly sacrificed his health in the herculean task imposed upon him. Faithfully did the committee perform its duty, notwithstanding the mismanagement laid bare was that of its party friends. It was shown that an institution but recently chartered in the interest of the whole Union had been prostituted to the interest of a ring of favored stockholders, whose chief seat of operations was at Baltimore, a city whence privateering and other loose ventures had of late years emanated, though all had supposed its prosperity firm as a rock. By a species of verbal evasion to which

1818. November.

corporate management is always prone, the charter restraint upon individual subscriptions and votes had been so nullified that a hundred or two of these speculators who had subscribed at the outset $4,000,000 out of the $28,000,000 (which, together with $7,000,000 invested by the United States, constituted the maximum capital), acquired control of the parent bank by taking their shares in the name of some fifteen thousand persons, or half the entire number of stockholders, and at the same time procuring their proxies. This Baltimore subscription, equal in fact to Philadelphia's, and double that of either New York or Boston, was by no means paid in cash, but with deferred instalments secured by a pledge of the stock itself at the exaggerated valuation to which these managers themselves had forced it; a vicious practice which the bank directors extended to some other loans, discounting, in fact, the notes of their favorites without requiring other security. Minor abuses were brought to light: violations of duty, in which government and private directors concurred (for Jones, the president, was a government director); bribes bestowed under the cover of a division of private profits, and, throughout, a culpable system of favoritism, which the powerful stockholders made no delicacy, as it would seem, of compelling at the hands of those whom they had voted into the board and might vote out again. At an expense of over $500,000, the bank had imported from abroad some $7,000,000 of specie through an agent of its own, which, however, was pleaded as an error of judgment; and surely ignorance and fraud were blended in the management of the bank in proportions scarcely distinguishable. The experiment of equalizing exchange at its own cost, from which, we have seen, the parent bank had just retreated with such vexation to the people, resulted, probably, from ignorance of the first principles of banking, though calculated at the outset, unlike its other errors, to promote the public convenience; for as the northern banks were thus required to receive each other's notes,—that is to say, to redeem them in specie on presentation,—the honest New York and Boston

branches found their own funds absorbed in serving as disbursing offices for the spendthrift establishments of Philadelphia and Baltimore, a considerable portion of whose issues were made for the benefit of the profligate managers and their friends. Left almost utterly without the means of making loans of its own, the Boston branch, rather than come to a complete stoppage, had, as it seems, begun to refuse the notes of the other branches; so that the stress of the mother bank soon forced it to abandon altogether a scheme under the circumstances impracticable, and leave the Baltimore branch to cope with its increasing difficulties as best it might; for, as it should be borne in mind, the circulating notes of the bank and its branches were not issued under a single direction.

By a compact made with the Secretary of the Treasury in 1816, the national bank became bound, in the furtherance of specie resumption, to discount heavily and sustain with its unbroken credit and capital every State bank which might join in the arrangement; hence its business began earlier than self-concern might have warranted, and moreover without local co-operation in procuring its specie supply, there being at that time no metallic circulation outside of New England. An immense mass of State-bank paper found its way, accordingly, into the vaults of this institution; a large part having been received in payment of the deferred instalments of its stock and from the Treasury, which, under an option clause of the charter, found opportunity to unload its own supply. Firmly, moderately, and consistently wielding the power thus confided, the national bank might have held the State banks to the permanent specie basis intended in 1817, forcing only the unsound ones into liquidation.* But after the first brilliant stroke of resumption the greed of the managers had kept them chiefly intent upon their own corrupt schemes; and when at last those schemes, together with more honest errors, threatened the utter prostration and ruin of the institution, its resources being further drained

* See vol. ii, p. 449.

by unexpectedly large drafts made upon the government deposits, mainly for the purpose of paying off the first five millions of the Louisiana loan, pressure upon the State banks, so many of which had been allowed to backslide, appeared, not discipline, but tyranny itself,—a deliberate effort, in fact, to demolish local banks, solvent and insolvent, and monopolize the field of finance.

The House committee fearlessly carried its scrutiny into all these doings, holding sessions in Philadelphia for that purpose, and examining the books of the corporation. Upon the disclosure of its report, drawn by Spencer's own hand, the stock of the bank dropped to 93. Various propositions were offered in consequence for repealing the charter or else vacating it by legal process. With the moneyed men of the country urging, as always, a conservative policy, Congress finally resolved not to destroy the bank but to reform it. Jones, the president, resigned, together with others of the directors deserving censure; and Langdon Cheves, of South Carolina, a man of talent and integrity, gave up his seat in the House to become president of the bank; another able director, newly appointed on behalf of the government, being Nicholas Biddle. Spencer and John Tyler, two members of the House, who together had served on the bank committee, boldly exposing the unprincipled conduct of party friends, separated at the final adjournment, never again to co-operate at Washington until after a lapse of more than twenty years, and under circumstances singularly recalling the present. And thus is our narrative brought to the date at which the present period opens.*

1819. Jan.-Feb.

Cheves entered upon the presidency of the Bank of the United States at Philadelphia fully determined, with his

* Annals of Congress; Act March 3, 1819; Niles's Register; Monroe MSS. Secretary Crawford appears to have thought well of President Jones, considering his resignation simply as an inevitable consequence of the state of affairs at the Baltimore branch. Gallatin's Works, 1819. The report of the House committee leaves an impression far less favorable, though perhaps he was weak rather than corrupt.

new board of directors, to know the worst as to its condition, and provide accordingly. His charge was assumed none too early, for the institution was already seriously embarrassed, and, indeed, on the brink of irretrievable ruin. By this time the measures of a prudent administration must have contemplated not profit, but safety. From the first it was strongly suspected that there must be something radically vicious in the management of the Baltimore branch. Inquiry confirmed that suspicion by disclosing facts warranting the dismissal of its principal officers, who were in truth the largest debtors of that branch. They offered the parent bank additional security if indulged with more time; and by May 20 security for what they owed was procured, not without difficulty, to the amount of $900,000. The next day proof of their unfaithfulness being brought distinctly before the board, McCulloch, the cashier of the branch, was instantly dismissed, and power was assumed to remove Buchanan, the president, who, however, with several directors implicated in the maladministration, resigned in a few days. Upright and confidential officers, chosen in their stead, made summary examination of the real condition of affairs, when a state of corruption and delinquency most appalling was disclosed.* The president, cashier, first teller, and several directors of this branch had united in committing breaches of trust for their private emolument. Large sums of money had been withdrawn by these persons for their own use, either upon stock pledged for much more than it was worth or with no security at all, the proceeds to be dissipated in their desperate ventures. They had allowed confederates to overdraw their accounts, and discounted worthless paper without submitting it for approval to the directors' board. Following this shameful revelation, down went the great commercial house of Smith & Buchanan, which for thirty years had been one of the foremost in the Union, and the leading one of Baltimore, dragging after it many lesser firms,

May.

* Biddle to Monroe, July, 1819; Monroe MSS.

and disgraced in its fall by the expedients employed by its junior partner to save it.* Another profligate bank of the city closed its doors. It was a day of mourning for Baltimore. Since 1812 no city in the Union had appeared more steadily prosperous, and now the vain mask had dropped.

All this was disclosed while Monroe made a southern tour, accompanied by the Secretary of War, which included a visit to Jackson. Cheves and his associates pursued unflinchingly the distressing course which events had rendered necessary, not permitting powerful reprobates to trample upon them. As the law then stood, the criminal remedies for breach of trust were defective ; but they pointed out new safeguards against future malfeasance, meantime employing civil process to the utmost for making good the enormous deficiency which the bank capital had sustained. Debtors, honest or dishonest, were sued, and their property attached. The notes discounted on pledge of the stock, a security now so greatly sunk in value, were called in upon partial payments. Local banks were pressed to take up their accumulated paper. The policy of honest retrenchment was vigorously pursued, and, so far from repealing the rule which made bank bills payable only where issued, they abolished the exceptions. By thus bringing the business of the bank to a safe and legitimate basis, and appropriating all present profits to repair past losses, Cheves was enabled to show the stockholders, before the year ended, that though no dividends could be declared for two years to come, or until an ascertained deficiency of $3,000,000 should be repaired, $1,700,000 of which stood chargeable to the Baltimore branch, the institution was quite out of danger, and its credit fairly restored. But November.

* Samuel Smith, of this firm, a veteran legislator in Congress, and one who had always held his head high, laid the blame of the whole calamity upon his partner, Buchanan. Maryland kept him still in public life at Washington until his death, which occurred twenty years later. His reputation, even in old age, was that of a sagacious, practical, and laborious member, not brilliant, but having a fine faculty for despatching the public business, with which long experience made him familiar.

it was not saved without making relentless enemies, whose appeals to State prejudice, however disingenuous, were rarely made in vain.*

Following the panic created at Baltimore, a run had commenced on the State banks in our middle, southern, and western sections, the United States Bank at the same time demanding the payment of balances. A legion of these banks, mostly those of the newly settled towns, stopped payment in the summer, leaving their repudiated paper to float while it might among the simple and credulous, passing from one hand to another. There being no uniform bankruptcy act, local laws were left to deal with corporate and individual insolvents after a capricious and irregular fashion. Insolvency notices filled the advertising columns of the newspapers. Merchants met in mass to memorialize Congress or devise their own remedies for the crisis. The farmer, as well as the manufacturer and the merchant, found himself suddenly poor. The thin shell of pretentious capital was crushed. Staple products, such as wheat, upon whose annual export the general prosperity had so greatly depended, fell without warning to half their former prices; and in the midst of utter stagnation, with values declining, banks unable or unwilling to afford their usual accommodations, and mercantile confidence shaken, the maker of American goods found shipments from a foreign market, against which the existing tariff gave him no adequate protection, displacing his own commodities. Foreign goods sought purchasers in our ports, though it were at a sacrifice; for the countries with which we chiefly traded felt themselves also impoverished. Abroad prices and credit were greatly depressed; money was scarce in England and France; these were the days of the Manchester and Rochdale riots, and of Peel's act for bringing back the Bank of England to its long abandoned course of specie payment.

Fortified, no doubt, by England's hearty retraction at

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* See stockholders' report, November, 1819; Niles's Register; 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary; Monroe MSS.

this date of the fatal heresy of inconvertible paper, encouraged by the spectacle of the eastern banks, whose solid array remained unbroken, the American people rallied nobly to sustain the government and the Bank of the United States in a final effort to restore specie payments in earnest, and reach the bed-rock of financial honor. Under the stern decimating process which State legislatures of their own accord applied in this exigency, the "rag-money banks," as they were called, many of them superfluous for local needs, and admitted to have been imprudently created, closed their doors, some voluntarily winding up their affairs and surrendering their charters, others compelled by the sterner process of forfeiture for dishonoring their notes. Of these so many were in debt to the national bank that not a few kept up solely through its forbearance. Most of those which sank despairingly were country banks, whose expenses, and in many instances their losses through the speculation or ignorance of their managers, had been out of all proportion to the actual capital. In the chief Atlantic centres of trade, as throughout New England, specie payments were well maintained; but elsewhere, and particularly in the more remote and sparsely settled parts of the Union, west and south, the vitiated paper of suspended and insolvent banks circulated sluggishly for many years, and finally lodged in the hands of the small farmers and mechanics. State legislatures grew cautious about granting new charters; but before the lesson could be fully learned, our deluded community heaved and struggled as under a nightmare; and in the riotous political campaigns of Kentucky and Ohio, which sometimes approached a civil war, one might well fear that perpetual paper money would carry the day. 1819-20.

Not wholly irrational was the belief that the colossal United States Bank had done much to produce these ills. Before the exposure of its leprous management a popular agitation had begun, under the auspices of Democratic Republicans. Maryland led, Pennsylvania and other States promising to follow, in the effort to tax the institution out of the State

jurisdiction. The bank resisted the Maryland law, and a test case came up to the Supreme Court of the United States. Marshall and his associates, reversing the judgment of the Maryland Court of Appeals, solemnly pronounced the State tax unconstitutional, at the same time maintaining the fundamental power of Congress to incorporate a national bank.* The anti-monopolists yielded; but a few weeks later the Baltimore defalcation left in the very title of this case the sting of ignominy. In Ohio, where a similar tax had been assessed, the decision was bitterly repudiated by the State officials. Under a State warrant the sum of $50,000, which the branch bank at Chillicothe refused to pay upon such a demand, was forcibly taken out of its vaults, in contempt of an injunction from the Circuit Court.† Two officers who executed this warrant were taken in custody by the United States marshal and prosecuted for forcible trespass, while the bank brought its civil suit to recover the money; and this collision of authority was projected into the Ohio political canvas for a year or two longer. At first the State legislature would have outlawed the bank; but the excitement effervesced in the proposal, together with Pennsylvania, of a constitutional amendment. Kentucky's enmity to the institution had meanwhile found expression in a decision of the State Court of Appeals, which, by a higgling construction of the national charter, denied to the Bank of the United States the right to sue upon a promissory note.‡ But the Federal courts piloted the bank through all these perils.

The period of 1819–20 was one of great depression and distress. Many a one who had lately been independent and thrifty lost by misplaced confidence in some bank or through the failure of a friend whose notes he had indorsed, or a brother, son, or father who must be shielded from imprisonment. They who went surety for others smarted for it.

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* See McCulloch *v.* State of Maryland, 4 Wheat. 316.

† Niles's Register. There were two branch banks in Ohio, and $50,000 was levied upon each of them.

‡ Niles's Register.

Even for him who stood clear, the maxim was to hoard and wait. Trade was for the present prostrate and profitless; and capital which had earned ten per cent. on good security had to content itself with four or five. Benton, whose impressions were derived at the far west, has recalled these years as an era of gloom and agony; with no price for produce and property, no sales except by the marshal and sheriff, and no purchaser except the creditor and some hoarder of money; with stop laws, property laws, replevin laws, stay laws, the intervention between debtor and creditor, constituting the chief business of legislation; with no medium of exchange except depreciated paper, and inland exchanges utterly deranged.* Even silver change was scarce in these days; and while at the chief centres of trade prices were accommodated to the small Spanish 6¼ and 12½ cent coins, little tickets or bits of foul paper, marked with numerals and signed by the baker or grocer, served as fractional currency in the remote interior. All this prevailing distress gave of necessity an acrid flavor to whatever public question might provoke a controversy, as we shall presently see. But we find it alleviated by that spirit of voluntary and sympathetic co-operation which is after all the excellent trait of our republican life; co-operation in present succor for the unfortunate, in benevolent works, in devising the intelligent means of recuperating.

American diplomacy may often be studied to advantage by shifting the point of view to some foreign court. For the present, and, indeed, during Monroe's long administration through two terms, Spain and Spanish American affairs supplied the chief, in fact, almost the only element of excitement in our foreign relations. A few niggardly favors reciprocated with other European powers for the passing benefit of commerce, other more tangible advantages sought on our behalf but refused,—this tells the rest of the tale of diplomacy. But the absorption of Spanish territory in our

* 1 Benton's Thirty Years' View, 5.

Union under the Florida treaty, and the ultimate fate of the South American colonies, aroused the passions of the hour ; and European countries and the United States keenly watched the progress of the patriot struggle in the southern continent, not only with those diverse sympathies which result from political differences of creed, but with the consciousness of diverse interests, such as might eventually lead neutral powers into rival combinations sooner or later, for the purpose of bringing about the differing results hoped for. Spain was at this juncture mistress neither of the situation nor herself; nevertheless, mutual conferences of the allied powers which had brought the European war to a successful close dictated her course as to Spanish America, at the same time checkmating the schemes of one another. In these conferences England took the lead, and to make that lead the more positive in favor of a solution which, well worked out, promised a decided enlargement of British commerce with the new world, her ministry favored more and more the idea of fellowship and a friendly cooperation with the United States ; for we were a rising power whose interests and feelings tended, like those of our mother-country, to counteract those of narrow-minded continental sovereigns who were jealous of great navies and stubbornly opposed to all governments which professed a leaning to public opinion.

From this stand-point, then, our intercourse with Great Britain assumes an interesting, and for the first time in our history, a truly pleasant aspect. Elsewhere, diplomatic duties were dull, and performed by our public agents after a perfunctory fashion. Gallatin passed an easy, irresponsible life in Paris, for the most part, corresponding with Humboldt, Baring, and other Europeans of distinction as a savant may do, and growing every year more of a Switzer and less of an American in his new drift from those national politics which had made him famous; a living illustration of Jefferson's maxim that long diplomatic service abroad is apt to unfit American citizens for their own country. At St. Petersburg, Campbell, of Tennessee, who bore in his person the

sole representative honors of the west as the only statesman able and available in that section, yawned amid the stupid festivities of a court from which the Emperor was absent much of the time, until the scourge of family affliction drove him home from its rigorous climate; Henry Middleton, of South Carolina, succeeding him. At London alone perhaps, except for Madrid, were there duties as well as dissipations to attract an American minister.

Our relations with England now began to be conducted on the equal footing of entire independence. A British ministry was no longer insolent or contemptuous on the one hand, nor, on the other, showed momentary complaisance for some obvious purpose. Between the peace of 1814 and Monroe's accession the English attitude might perhaps have appeared indifferent ; this chiefly, however, because the tremendous concerns involved in Napoleon's exile and the re-settlement of Europe engrossed the whole attention of the government ; for when Adams took his departure from St. James to become Monroe's Secretary of State, Castlereagh assured him that the Prince Regent intended conciliation,* which assurance was faithfully kept. Bagot, too, the English minister, who arrived at Washington soon after the war, a man of agreeable manners, and the younger brother of a peer, proved himself in three years popular as no representative from that country had ever been before; thus affording an instance, as Adams has noted, that moderate ability united with good character and discretion will qualify better for a routine diplomatic post than great talents ;† to which add the discipline of experience under favoring conditions and the maxim deserves a much wider application.

It is, perhaps, not too belittling to our American minister who served contemporaneously as Adams's successor at the Court of St. James to apply to him the above observation. Richard Rush had that ease of manners which high

* 4 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, May, 1817.
† Ib., 1819.

breeding, careful training, and familiar intercourse in early life with the best of metropolitan society can alone insure; and, marrying early in life a Maryland lady, he had, before the late war, moved from his native city to Washington, under auspices which developed into a national statesman one who restored to fastidious Philadelphia the diplomatic renown which she had lost since Franklin's death. Bred to the bar after graduating at Princeton, but soon diverted into a public and national career; promoted with little delay from comptroller of the United States Treasury to the highest grades of cabinet and diplomatic office, where he long served without ever having been elected by his constituents to either branch of Congress; and doubtless favored by our national Executives as the scion of an influential Pennsylvania family with liberal tendencies, his appointment to the English mission when only thirty-seven years old elicited envious criticism. He was not esteemed as highly as he deserved, so that even judicious friends believed he had risen too rapidly. But youth is an objection which lessens every day; and an eight years' experience at the court of London corrected a slight exuberance, mingled with self-distrust, at first perceptible, and proved him, what he always was, genial and appreciative, an intelligent observer of the changing moods of diplomatic circles, where he readily made himself a favorite, and at the same time unwearied in the conscientious discharge of the duties committed to him; while remaining, what above all was to his credit, a thorough American, even to enthusiasm, in his tastes and preferences. His conduct was acceptable not less abroad than to his own government. Without Jay's predilection for English institutions on the one hand, or the antipathies of the two Adamses on the other, Rush did more than all of his predecessors together to bring Great Britain and the United States into the desirable state of mutual harmony and mutual self-respect, as, to be sure, the times favored; and though appending his name to no negotiation of positive consequence, save as might relate to the slave trade,—for liberal treaties were in that day im-

possible,—he left, nevertheless, an indelible impression upon the European diplomacy of the times as peacemaker and friend of liberty.

Being a quick and intelligent observer, and gifted, moreover, with an easy, flowing style, which clearly expressed his meaning, Rush at this period reduced to writing, in a neat round hand, the impressions he formed abroad of men and passing events. The journal he kept at London, from which a popular book was afterwards compiled, together with his personal letters to Monroe, with whom he still kept up a frank, unofficial, and even filial correspondence, vividly illustrate the life of an American minister in London during those years, such as one may search in vain through public archives to discover.* Affection for his chief and a buoyant disposition to do his administration credit give to the letters a peculiar charm. He was on the alert for everything that our Executive might turn to advantage, from naval reforms discussed with the captain who took him across the ocean to the gravest chamber confidences of Canning respecting the designs of the Holy Alliance in South America. Arrived at London, he examined with interest its new and costly docks, Thames tunnel, the crowded bridges, the stupendous mass of buildings, spires, domes, monuments, and factories,—all these signs of national energy and opulence that falsified the doleful predictions of England's decay which had begun at least as long ago as Queen Anne. His presentation to the Prince Regent he recorded with all its attendant circumstances; his drive to the houses of the royal dukes, themselves but British subjects, where a foreign ambassador had to write his name in a book which was kept in the hall, and in effect pay civilities to footmen and porters; his first call upon Castlereagh, which was tardily but most courteously returned. 1818-20.

It is the usual business of a diplomatist to generalize from small data; to gather state secrets, if he may, from a royal

* See Rush's Residence at the Court of London; also Monroe MSS.

whisper, the mercury of a secretary's manners, or the passing gossip of the glittering circle in which foreign representatives mingle together. A fervid imagination aided Rush's perceptive powers in this direction. One who reduces to writing the impressions thus casually conveyed may find occasion to sift the facts, to revise and modify conclusions, as must all journalizers, if they grow wiser instead of worse. But with Rush a cautious disbelief in British professions, with which he began his work, made him err in his deduction, if at all, on the side of prudence, so that the friendships he finally formed at the court of London were the sound offspring of a better mutual acquaintance, tending to allay both the distrust on one side and the fault on the other which had inspired it.

In England at this time the circles of rank and station were almost exclusively those of public influence. Rush tried to conciliate upon his arrival by frequenting such circles; but he found them cold in their atmosphere, not to be thawed, and incapable, as he first thought, of nourishing sentiments of generous friendship and kindliness. Despite the rule of primogeniture, they who moved in this exalted set neither were nor could be refined; and, both in manners and table intercourse, Americans, at this early stage of our development, seemed to him already their superiors. To this stricture Holland House might constitute an exception; but in the multiplied subdivisions of London society, parliamentary men, though pursuing literature as an accomplishment, were widely separated from the purely professional authors. The British aristocracy, whether of the Whig or Tory stripe, appeared to agree in a fundamental dislike of the American political system, and to regard our people as a sort of degenerate British offspring. "It is useless to disguise," said one of this circle, frankly, "that the two countries are at heart opposed, and fight it out on the ocean we must;" and this remark impelled Rush all the more to take note of every casual indication, by eulogy or otherwise, that the ministry was watching the American navy suspiciously and studying its strength. In the bear-

ing of the Prince Regent, Rush thought he detected symptoms of incivility, though his first reception was perhaps as cordial as that of any other foreign minister. The newspapers, too, in the Ministerial and Whig interest, appeared so little disposed to put the cause and resources of the United States favorably before the British public that a simple advertisement drawn up by him to promote the sale of a pamphlet which reproduced in London our official correspondence touching the Spanish dispute, in order to correct misstatements of the press, was offered to ten London newspapers, of which only one, the *Morning Chronicle*, at last consented, and that with reluctance, to give it a place. James's book on the War of 1812, compiled from official sources, was decidedly disparaging in tone to the United States. Finally, as for living in London with a rank to maintain, Rush found himself cheated, like other foreigners, by cook, coachman, footman, and purveyor; the item of house rent soon forced him to inhabit the suburbs; and with his moderate official stipend, such as could scantily stretch out to meet the social demands made upon him, our English minister, when he heard of Campbell's affliction, would fain have exchanged posts with him, and taken up his abode among the frozen swamps of the Neva.*

All the while, however, Bagot was gaining influence in Washington circles; and Rush, on his part, found the official hospitalities at London merging into something like a hearty good-will. Before he had been minister twelve months he observed that, in the turn of Spanish affairs, the British Regency showed an increasing disposition to cultivate a good understanding with the government he represented. Delicacy towards the United States with reference to Spain's proposal of mediation was in proof of this; and more strongly still, the unexampled leniency with which the court-martial of Arbuthnot and Ambrister was treated. Castlereagh himself had reached out a friendly hand from the first; and to his lasting honor be it spoken, without too

* See Monroe MSS.; Rush's Residence.

keen a scrutiny into motives, he henceforth appeared as sedulous to soften the animosities of 1812 as he had formerly been to provoke them.

It must not be supposed, however, that the proud ministry of this sea-girt isle would yield commercial favors with a free hand, or even abate from the time-honored policy of raising disputes upon the king's written compacts so as to make the concession of some professed doubt serve as inducement for a new concession in return from the adversary. For while Spain, or France under Napoleon, would make a cause of war by obstinately refusing to fulfil a solemn treaty, thus putting herself in the wrong, England, more astute, took to cavilling over phrases, while admitting a solemn obligation to execute according to whatever those phrases might signify, and thereby avoided a rupture while asserting an interpretation to suit herself; so, too, did her negotiators favor putting doubts out to commissioners to be worked into a disagreement. And thus did it now come about under the treaty of Ghent, a treaty which perpetuated earlier disputes reaching way back to 1783. All the terms essential for bringing an expensive war to an end had been fulfilled, troops were mutually withdrawn, and the peace armament of the lakes established. All that, of course, was desirable to the mother-country as to us. But with respect to boundaries on the Canadian frontier, there were still points of difference; controversies had arisen respecting the right of Americans to take and cure fish off the Grand Bank; southerners claimed indemnity for their slaves carried bodily away by the British forces. Moreover, the commercial convention of July, 1815,* arranged by Adams, would expire by its own terms in 1819. A new treaty was called for, and Gallatin joined Rush in order to make the embassy imposing. Rights in the West India trade were desired, besides a formal abolition of the right to search and impress. Castlereagh appointed commissioners on the British side; but after a few weeks of projects and counter-

* Vol. ii, p. 438.

projects the conference ended in scarcely more than an extension of the old convention ten years longer. The slave indemnity question, however, was referred to the Emperor of Russia, who, as umpire, awarded finally in favor of the United States.*

Castlereagh still desired our co-operation in measures for suppressing, more forcibly, the African slave trade; for notwithstanding the simultaneous abolition of this inhuman traffic in 1808,† it was still carried on under cover of the Spanish and Portuguese flags, while the pecuniary penalties announced by the abolishing countries proved inadequate for putting down a traffic lucrative enough to cover all the chances of loss by capture. Slave ships became more crowded than ever, from the necessity of running risks, and when hotly pursued, the master would not unfrequently throw his shrieking cargo overboard. These complaints were peculiarly of British origin, and the Wilberforce party created a strong British sentiment in favor of a stronger suppression. Sweden, Denmark, Holland and France had pronounced their condemnation of the traffic. By all the

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* See Convention of October 20, 1818; Statutes at Large. And see Monroe MSS. containing full details of this negotiation from Rush's memoranda; Diplomatic papers; President's messages, 1818-20. Rush seems to have expected much better things from the conferences which turned out so unsatisfactorily. As to the fisheries, the arrangement finally made was procured with the utmost difficulty. The controversy began in a British protest against Americans who were found fishing off the Grand Bank; this protest being filed soon after Monroe's inauguration, and while Rush had temporary charge of the State Department.

See J. Q. Adams's Diary, October, 1818, as to the modified proposals for abolishing impressment to which our text alludes. Upon the West India trade, which American merchants were very eager and too sanguine about procuring, an ultimatum was proposed which our plenipotentiaries transmitted to Washington, their authority not permitting them to accept it. The President and cabinet, however, concluded that it left our whole commercial intercourse too much at British discretion, and hence dissented. A further proposal was made by this government, which Castlereagh blandly declined on behalf of the crown. See President's Message, December 7, 1819, and accompanying documents; J. Q. Adams's Diary.

† See vol. ii, p. 125.

concurrent European powers in the Congress of 1818 the slave trade was declared repugnant to the principles of humanity and of universal morality; and this, together with the tardy accession of Spain and Portugal to the principles of abolition, under treaties which were presently to operate, made Castlereagh hope to extirpate the cruisers now outlawed by Christendom. The British memorials urged the ministry to use their efforts particularly with the United States and France. France certainly had not been efficient in suppressing the slave traffic. As for our own country, the social structure of half the States in the Union, many of them but newly opened to slave labor, strongly tempted the sordid to a surreptitious traffic, in defiance of law; yet the national conscience had lately spoken in two acts of the fifteenth Congress, the one passed in 1818, the other in 1819, to which we shall again refer.* Bagot left the United States soon after the conclusion of the convention of 1818, and under Stratford Canning, his successor, an arrangement was sought for suppressing the slave trade.†

As for Spanish affairs, Great Britain and the United States by the spring of 1819 tended to a good understanding. Powerless to reduce his own South American subjects, Ferdinand wished to impose the task upon his allies; but to anything beyond a peaceful mediation they disinclined, and at the European Congress of 1818 the subject was avoided. Castlereagh was disposed to invite the United States to confer with the allies upon the point of a peaceful intervention, but to this our government would not listen.‡ So far from seeking to obstruct the Florida treaty, England's influence steadily favored the acquisition of that province by the United States, since Spain could not hold it longer. But had the United States, said Castlereagh, shown a spirit of encroachment, English policy would have been different.§

1817–18.

1818.

* Acts April 20, 1818; March 3, 1819.

† Rush's Residence; J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1819.

‡ Monroe MSS.

§ Rush's Residence; Monroe MSS.

Our administration had found great difficulty in preserving an honest neutrality on the part of the United States while the tide of sympathy with the Spanish revolutionists was constantly rising. At Baltimore, privateers were fitted out on behalf of the insurgents, and let loose to ravage the enemy's commerce. The suspected parties were prosecuted; but Pinkney, who took retainers on their behalf, contrived their escape through the meshes of the law, and nearly fifty years later the precedent came up in our civil war to plague us.* 1819.

Monroe now proposed, as the immediate object of his foreign policy, to carry through the Florida treaty with Spain, and then give direction to public sentiment with our people on the Spanish American question, keeping the policy of this government under its own control.† But this purpose was thwarted in a manner wholly unexpected and vexatious. Forsyth reached Madrid with the treaty already ratified by our Senate and his own credentials as minister; but his reception was by no means cordial. The Cortes delayed action on the document; and when he asked the reasons, he received a baffling reply. Don Onis, who negotiated the treaty, was at Paris, on his way homeward, when D'Yrujo, whom we believed anxiously desirous of having the compact confirmed, was suddenly dismissed from office and banished; and simultaneously came a report that the treaty would not be ratified for the present, and that England was trying to get Cuba. What could all this mean? Had Castlereagh or the allies played false with the United States? On the contrary, most of the principal powers of Europe—Great Britain, France, and Russia—were trying to induce Ferdinand to affix his approval. With his council of grandees and ecclesiastics, owlish, ignorant, 1819. March.

* See 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1818—19. And see note by Hon. Charles Francis Adams, showing that Great Britain used the Baltimore proceedings in her own justification when the United States remonstrated as to fitting out the Alabama and other privateers.

† 4 J Q. Adams's Diary.

and wedded to superstition, whom only a muleteer might fitly have undertaken to set right in such matters, the obstinate king pulled back at the halter at this late day, refusing to be persuaded of obligations.

What in good truth was the stumbling-block the king never clearly explained; but from other sources one may gather that it was dread of the very advantage Monroe had hoped for, that of dealing with the South American problem unembarrassed by the Florida dispute. In other words, Ferdinand feared that the United States would recognize the South American republics as soon as the treaty was ratified. And while the king's mind was in this troubled state it was still further inflamed by the exaggerated report of a rash and unsuccessful invasion of Spanish Texas during the summer by border Americans.

These excuses were unreasonable. The South American question had not been decided; of the Texan invasion our government was innocent. On the other hand, to stop at the last stage of ratification a treaty solemnly executed by reputed authority, and under circumstances whose force should have been foreseen, as though for extorting some new guarantee from the United States under the original consideration, called surely for spirited remonstrance. A silent lapse of six months should of itself have made the king's obligation perfect; for if Ferdinand meant to repudiate the contract of his accredited minister he should have done so promptly, and on the specific allegation, moreover, that the minister had exceeded his instructions. By August, therefore, Monroe and his cabinet began to hold consultations, in which this last principle was unanimously approved. The next natural step, unless the situation changed, would be to ask Congress, when it convened, to enable the Executive to take summary possession of our purchase. Crawford proposed instructing Forsyth to demand immediate ratification, or else his passport; but this, it was thought, was going further than was needful.

August.

Pending the preparation of the annual message, a vessel

arrived in November, bearing despatches from Spain, which announced, in confirmation of earlier rumors, that Ferdinand had determined to delay ratifying the treaty, but intended sending a minister to the United States to ask and give certain explanations. Aware of this resolve, both France and Russia signified to this government in a friendly way that it would be well to await the minister's arrival. After some bickering among his counsellors,—Crawford, for some cause or another, inclining to headlong rashness, and Adams to prudence,—the President, whose message, as first drafted, was impetuous in expression, finally toned it down and recommended the occupation of the Floridas, not at once and absolutely, but so as to allow of the explanations desired by Spain. Nor was the language of this message touching the South American revolution so strongly sympathetic as the sentiment of our people and Monroe's first impulse would have prompted. November.

The discussion of this message in Cabinet prompted Crawford, who was a good story-teller, to relate the anecdote of a Georgia governor who once told his secretary to make the phrase of a certain executive despatch "a little more mysterious." The aptness of the allusion produced a hearty laugh, and in few of our executive documents is the narrative of complaint followed so circumspectly by the argument for forbearance as in Monroe's third annual message, where the Spanish situation is stated.*

* See President's Message, December 7, 1819. The drift of the Cabinet discussions may be ascertained from J. Q. Adams's Diary, August–November, 1819. The message sets forth at some length Forsyth's vain effort at Madrid to receive or make official explanation; together with the instruction sent him (not without an effort, as we have seen, on Crawford's part, in the August deliberations, to make the rebuke to Spain more pointed), namely, to inform the government of Spain that if the treaty should be ratified and transmitted at any time before Congress met, it would be treated as if ratified in due time. The broad hint thus conveyed that later delay would provoke Congress to summary legislation seems to have elicited the answer from Spain, received late in November, to which our text alludes, and which imputed the Texas expedition and an attempt to alter one of the articles as the King's objections to ratifying. This "alteration," we may observe, was in reality

This message, devoted as it chiefly was to a patient discussion of Spanish affairs, was handed in to the sixteenth Congress on the day after it assembled. That Congress, ever memorable for one momentous compromise between north and south, met on the appointed day, a quorum of both houses appearing, and speedily organized for business. Looking upon either body from the gallery, one saw very little change from previous years. The eccentric Randolph reappeared after an absence of two years; but the trio of young men identified with three memorable debates of the previous Congress, Spencer, Tallmadge, and Poindexter, had all disappeared.

Already was it found difficult to draw in this body the old line of political demarcation. Several members came to the President about the time Congress assembled to ask whether Clay ought to be displaced as Speaker of the House because of his hostility in the previous Congress; but Monroe refused to give his conduct such consequence.* Clay was accordingly re-elected on the first ballot, by a vote of 147 to 8, and to all intents without any opposition.†

The new wings of our stately Capitol had by this time been rebuilt; and each branch of Congress assembled, for the first time since the British invasion, upon the area originally marked out for national use, and within walls never before consecrated to legislation. Could it be possible that

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to rectify an ambiguous phrase regarding certain Spanish grants of land in Florida previously made; Adams pointing out an error of Onis on this point, who simply pledged himself that the expression used was inadvertent, and not by way of deception, the only possible alternative. See J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819, on this point. The reasons for delay thus assigned were trivial, unjust (as the President's message shows), and, of course, not candidly offered by the King.

As for the Spanish American republics, Monroe was ready to avow his inclination to recognize them; but he yielded to Adams's suggestion that the avowal would deepen the hostile expression of Spain, and that the less said about those republics just now the better, for independence and recognition would come in good time. J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819.

* 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, December, 1819.

† Annals of Congress; Niles's Register.

at their first occupancy these twin temples were to rock with an agitation which for a moment shook the pillars of our arched Union like the sudden shudder of an earthquake ?

The business prepared most sedulously by the Executive for the action of Congress is not necessarily that which commands its chief attention. For this session Spain gave way to the West; and Monroe's carefully phrased message was tossed aside in a new agitation of the Missouri question, which brought slavery and freedom face to face upon the most perilous issue of the nineteenth century in American politics: namely, the right and policy of legislating against the further extension of slavery in our national territory.

Before entering upon the narrative of the Missouri controversy and its immediate results, let us briefly sketch the progress of our anti-slavery cause to this date. There had been no serious agitation of the dreaded topic since the African slave trade was abolished in 1808. With that unanimous and happy fulfilment of a constitutional opportunity, patriots would fain have thought their duty done, and trusted the rest to a favoring Providence, whose approval they felt. But to stop the supply of Africans from abroad was like clipping but one root from a weed which was strongly imbedded in the soil, and might grow and propagate in other directions. The population of the United States increased after the act of 1808, as previously, at an average rate of about one-third in ten years; and if the whites had multiplied in numbers during the last decade the blacks themselves had kept not uneven pace. Confronted with this inner phase of the unsolved problem, the philanthropic spirit of the age turned, after war had ceased, to the possibilities of amalgamation, or, as more fairly styled, political incorporation, which Jefferson and his school of benefactors had always treated with a tender abhorrence. What was to be the ultimate relation of the black and white races should they grow on together under the progressive institutions of a republic surely great in destiny? Or could those races, together with the red, become so disconnected as to

leave to Americans not only a white man's government, but a white man's country?

One point had always been ceded without contention: namely, that each of the original States, and of those others which since 1789 had been admitted into the Union, unfettered by fundamental restraints imposed by Congress, was sovereign over the institution within its own borders. The State could abolish or perpetuate slavery at discretion where it already existed, besides regulating the condition of blacks within the jurisdiction, whether bond or free. Accepting this premise, the free States had loyally refrained from trespassing upon the rights of those already wedded to slavery; a conscience-smitten minority of their inhabitants resorting perhaps to mild remonstrance and exhortation, but the majority justifying apathy and inaction by putting the national responsibility upon the planters, somewhat as did planters of the day themselves upon their British ancestors. More than this, fugitive slaves who escaped into a free State were surrendered on the claim of the white owner; not without some pang of remorse, we may be sure, nor without a lurking fear lest some free black should be smuggled, because of his skin, into bondage; but for the imperious reason that the constitution of the United States, the charter of our own liberties, must be obeyed. And yet while fugitive slave laws might have been pronounced in 1789, or when that constitution went into effect, as really for the general benefit of adjacent States, a singular geographical change had since taken place. In fact, the original lines had since become so contracted while we pushed westward to the Mississippi, that at present, thirty years later, an anti-slavery and pro-slavery tier of States confronted one another from behind a long parallel; a real presage that when obedience to the constitution became sullen, those laws would be trampled on, and two sections of the Union, socially dissimilar and even repugnant, would occupy a relative attitude surely inviting civil war and bloodshed. The anti-slavery band of States voluntarily choosing freedom was already completed; New York having in 1817 proclaimed the total abolition of slavery

within its borders to be completed by July 4, 1827. So on the other side had the pro-slavery States drawn closer together, united by common traditions, common blood, and the common pursuit of staple agriculture through the great South, to protect, if not propagate, a system which they knew the voice of modern civilization condemned, but which to them meant for the present social order, stability, property, life itself, and the means of living. For the Union had never said to a State, "Emancipate, and we will indemnify you;" but "Emancipate and bear your own loss." There was a southern conscience; nevertheless the dread of an unshared impoverishment in order to please mankind stifled its voice.

Abolition by sovereign will of a slave State now ceased, and as for enslavement by a free State's legislation, this had never been attempted. Mild persuasion had done its work. Freedom called her roll at the north; slavery hers at the south; and compulsion on the national behalf being impossible, the Union left each section, or rather each sovereign member thereof, to its own independent action; limiting national exertions, first to making good the slave-trade prohibition, and next to forfending slavery from the soil of our virgin territories; for thus did the constitution as it stood circumscribe Congress. Legislation of late years in the slave States showed not only a growing indisposition towards local emancipation, but also an increasing dread of keeping emancipated blacks on their soil. Some of these States permitted emancipation only on condition that the freedman should immediately leave the State; others required security that he should never become chargeable as a pauper. Virginia in 1819 passed a law threatening to forfeit freedom should the freedman remain more than a year. Georgia taxed the negro twenty dollars a year for the privilege of remaining free, with the further penalty of expulsion if he failed to pay it. The constitutions of both Mississippi and Alabama, the latest slave States admitted, and that, too, without objection on the part of Congress, expressly forbade the legislative emancipation of a slave without the owner's

consent; and while emancipation in individual cases must have involved compensation to the owner, total abolition by a general act, as though in the exercise of eminent domain, was virtually forbidden. Such were the stringent provisions of State slave codes, by no means uncommon at the present period. The milder experiments of Virginia and Maryland prior to 1800, of which those States now wearied, were confessed failures; demonstrating, as it would appear to the southern mind, that free blacks were little better than thieving vagabonds, libidinous brutes, the firebrands of servile insurrection. Should uncaged beasts roam about the menagerie? Freedmen could not vote, of course, for suffrage was the prerogative peculiar to white males. This ostracism of the free negro was by no means confined, however, to the southern side of the line, for should he cross the turbid flood, any Ohio magistrate might put him under bonds not to become a pauper or disturber of the peace; and then again there was constant danger that by means of perjured testimony, such as slave-catchers knew well how to procure, he might be arrested as a fugitive and taken over the line, to be unscrupulously sold back into slavery. His japanned skin, which he could not cast, condemned him. All the States south of the border then, and many of those north, pressed the black man heavily; and even freedom might prove to such a one more burdensome than bondage; for here within a broad area of the American Union it was die or move on.

The Mississippi constitution forbade the passage of acts which should prevent immigrants from *bona fide* bringing their slaves into the State with them; though its legislature might check the importation of slaves for mere traffic, besides assuring the humane treatment of those locally held in bondage. But while all this was southern policy, southern legislation, on the other hand, tended to prevent free negroes from migrating into the slave States; and hence the question, tested about this period in some of the inferior courts, whether it was not obnoxious to the federal constitution to thus debar one of his privileges and immunities as a citizen of another State; an issue which might have assumed more

practical consequence had the black who had once tasted the blessedness of freedom and actual citizenship elsewhere cared to incur the risk of travelling into slave regions without an escort and settling there. How important became this theoretical issue, however, in dealing with the admission of Missouri, we shall see somewhat later.

To easy philanthropists and statesmen of the coming crop, north as well as south, who swore by the federal constitution as though it admitted of no fundamental amendment, admired the three great compromises as a master-stroke of genius, loved all brethren of the Union except agitators, and deprecated slavery and the black race about equally, the "American Colonization Society" afforded a respectable outlet for compassion; the generous scope of its mission embracing a comprehensive scheme of negro deportation from the United States, but a slender purse confining its actual efforts to the dumping of free blacks, reprobates, and castaways in some remote corner of the universe, to the better convenience of slaveholders themselves. This celebrated society was formed at Washington in December, 1816, shortly before Madison's term expired. Its annual meetings were held at Washington city for better influencing the national sentiment and Congress in its favor. Among its active directors were tender apologists or masters like Clay, Crawford, and John Randolph, of whom the last named proved a most inveterate organizer of the slave-holding interest against the north; and as its president served Justice Bushrod Washington, an amiable little man, residuary legatee of a transcendent name, who, having acquired Mount Vernon, sold half a hundred of his uncle's family slaves in lots consigned to Louisiana, asserting, when reproached for it, the unquestionable right, "legal and moral," that every slaveholder had to dispose of his own chattels.* From such

* See 21 Niles's Register, 1, 70.

In George Ticknor's Life, 39, Justice Bushrod Washington is described in 1815 as a little sharp-faced gentleman with only one eye, and with snuff all over his face.

a society, under such leaders, the South could have no aggressions to fear. Among its members were saints and sinners, exhibiting a strange medley of motives. Nevertheless it meant humanity: namely, so as to promote the interests of freedom consistently with those race prejudices of which the most enlightened of American citizens were assumed to partake. Under the auspices of this society was revived the plan which had captivated Jefferson's fancy in 1807,* though with a special and somewhat novel application. To plant a negro colony in Africa was, in a word, the cherished purpose of the American Colonization Society; the English establishment at Sierra Leone, now fairly on its feet, furnishing an example. Certainly there seemed poetic justice in restoring these exiles on American soil to their native land and original stock, if they really pined to return; and without reflecting whether they did or not, a lively fancy painted our southern negroes, crushed though they had been as a race under the iron heel of bondage and kept stupidly ignorant for fear they should rise against the master, as carrying at once to the aborigines of Africa the arts of civilized life, together with the blessings of Christianity,†—missionaries, as it were, among cannibals, to feed or be fed upon. But the Sierra Leone colony, which began as an asylum for four hundred necessitous blacks left on English ground with neither master nor parish responsible for their support, after Lord Mansfield's celebrated axiom confirmed their freedom, had not easily succeeded; and even when successful its example by no means softened the stupendous difficulties of the task thus to be attempted. To found the America Liberia by peopling it with blacks picked up here and there was one thing; but thus to solve the problem of slavery in the United States was quite another.

In short, the American Colonization Society was better calculated to lull the slaveholding conscience than arouse it.

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* See vol. ii, p. 128.

† To Justice Washington the American Colonization Society appeared in its most interesting aspect as an instrument for converting the African race to Christianity. Hodgson's Travels.

The physician dressed the morbid flesh, fearing to cauterize. The patient himself was amused with the thought that something, no matter what, was being tried. If half-measures could rid the Union of slavery, this scheme of African deportation was indeed worth trying. But half-measures are not God's measures; and already, while many liberal southerners, with honest zeal, commended an object utterly beyond the means of any private association to fulfil out of its solicited funds, the benevolent Quaker closed his purse and the ardent abolitionist his heart to a society which rumor at the north whispered had been organized to perpetuate slavery under the thin pretence of alleviating it.

Such imputations, not perhaps unnatural, were, however, surely unjust at the present era. The Society, to its praise be it spoken, gave direction to that national movement for better enforcing a slave-trade prohibition which is identified with Monroe's first administration. Great Britain's friendly efforts with the United States to that end we have already noticed;* and the promised aid of Spain and Portugal in extirpating slave cruisers on the ocean doubtless strengthened the popularity of the cause. The illicit introduction of slaves into the United States since 1808 was no imaginary complaint. This had furnished one of the strongest reasons for suppressing the revolutionary establishment at Amelia Island, where a chain of posts from the head of the St. Mary's through the Indian country had supplied the means of distributing the emaciated wretches to every part of our southern country. Various other attempts had been made to smuggle negroes over the lines from Jamaica and the neighboring Spanish ports, the Spanish flag having in many instances covered American capital employed in this execrable traffic. The treatment of the living cargo was brutal in the extreme. A small schooner of about sixty tons would reach Havana, containing nearly 150 of these miserable beings, packed into a small space between a floor laid over the water-casks and the deck, their bodies galled

* *Supra*, p. 129.

and ulcerated by the motion of the vessel, their rations rotten and their rice fermented.* Most of those who survived were likely to find their way to the Louisiana market, where there was a good demand for slave laborers. Even if seized in our southern ports, the permitted operation of local laws, under the act of 1807, with its meanest of compromises, must have inflicted further hardship upon the slave, besides wounding northern sensibilities acutely; for in Georgia and Louisiana such smuggled beings were sold at public auction, after a judicial condemnation, like so many casks of confiscated brandy; and the New Orleans buyer, it was said, sometimes turned informer, and invoked a prosecution in order to get his slaves cheaper than by the usual method of dealing with the trader.†

During the first session of the fifteenth Congress inquiry was made by a Senate committee into the expediency of additional legislation for the purpose of suppressing the foreign slave-trade, and so as to promote co-operation in policy with Great Britain; and a bill was reported, which became a law, extending the penalties of the prohibition of 1807 to the fitting out of vessels for the slave-trade or to the transporting of slaves to any country whatever.‡ By the second session, so indignant were our people with those auction sales of captured negroes at the southwest to which allusion has been made, that a further amendment of the act of 1807 was felt to be indispensable. Already had the American Colonization Society presented a memorial to Congress, and proclaimed its wish to plant a colony on the coast of Africa.

1819. Its co-operation was afforded in this dilemma, and an act passed offering a bounty of $50 to informers for every illegally imported African seized within the United States or taken at sea; enjoining it, moreover, upon the Executive to remove such persons of color beyond the limits of the United States, and to appoint agents on the coast of

* 3 Niles's Register, 1818.

† See vol. ii, p. 126.

‡ Act April 20, 1818. The burden of proof was also put upon those found in possession of negroes on a ship.

Africa for receiving them.* The Colonization Society obtained, through their fellow-member Crawford's influence,† some tangible benefits from this enactment, which they claimed had been procured through their efforts; for the President, though declining to purchase territory abroad for their scheme under so dubious a sanction, sent a public ship to the coast of Africa, with two salaried agents, besides the necessary means of food and shelter for such negroes as might be landed there.‡ By special arrangement with the Executive of Georgia, besides, the society took a number of illegally imported Africans from under the marshal's hammer and made African colonists of them. And thus, under the indirect sanction of our national government,—for Monroe disclaimed, under legislation so doubtful, any exercise of a colonizing power, a policy of which Congress had in former years been quite chary,—and with occasional aid given to the enterprise by donations from the pious and other Congressional appropriations, was founded the negro republic of Liberia on the grain coast of Upper Guinea; a colony which, after some misfortunes, involving a change from the unhealthy site at first selected, became in thirty years prosperous; chiefly, however, because abandoned by that time, through the poverty of the founding society, to its own resources, having meanwhile, like Sierra Leone, added neighboring negro tribes to its population, but never receiving more than a mere driblet of black settlers from the United States, nor appreciably furthering the scheme of American emancipation. 1819.

We may here add that the Colonization Society had some influence in procuring the passage of still another and more stringent act in 1820, which declared the slave-trade piracy, and, besides forfeiting the vessel, denounced the death penalty against all citizens of the United 1820.

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* Act March 3, 1819.

† See J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819. Adams was distrustful of the Colonization Society.

‡ See President's special message, December 17, 1819.

States who might engage in it.* It was not, however, until after the Missouri agitation, to be presently described, that the national sentiment was brought to this step. The slave-trade act of 1819, as it passed the House, would, to be sure, have punished slave-trading with death; but that provision was stricken out in the Senate. So bold, under lighter penalties, was the slave-trader in poaching to supply his southwestern market, that complaint came in 1818 from New Jersey of a coastwise traffic, under color of which negroes resident in that State, who would soon have become free under its gradual emancipation act, had been kidnapped and carried off. The legislatures both of New York and New Jersey strove to break up such traffic; but the co-operation of United States revenue officers was needed, and that co-operation Congress declined to direct.† Under sanction, however, of the act of 1819, the President employed our naval vessels in cruising on both the American and African coasts to capture slavers.‡

While the northern States sought to save their own from wolves that prowled about the fold, complaint was made that fugitive blacks were sheltered on free soil. In the first session of the fifteenth Congress border slaveholders petitioned for a new and more stringent fugitive-slave act to aid them in recovering their runaways. A bill for that purpose was reported in the House, its salient feature being that, as in the case of fugitives from justice, an Executive demand from the State whence the person escaped should be made upon the Governor of the State to which he had fled; the master's title in the present instance being sufficiently made out before some

1818. January-March.

* See Act May 15, 1820.

† Annals of Congress, December, 1818. What New Jersey desired was an act of Congress prohibiting the transportation of slaves from any State whose own laws forbade it; and the legislature of that State instructed its representatives accordingly. But the southern objection, as stated by Poindexter, was that any man has a right to remove his slaves from one State to another, except where the State laws prohibit; and with such State laws the United States has nothing to do.

‡ Act March 3, 1819.

judge of his own State. The objection was raised that free States went far enough when they surrendered up those who were proven slaves in their own jurisdiction; nevertheless the bill passed the House, and, with some amendments, the Senate too. At the last stage, however, its northern supporters appear to have repented their weak concession, for the House could not be induced to take the amended bill from the table.*

These secret evasions of the slave-trade prohibition, these inter-State collisions, these efforts to facilitate the recapture of fugitives, all indicated a new demand for slave labor in this country, which humanity could not easily resist while cupidity pandered to the want. To the natural instinct which had drawn together so closely the southern staple-producing States for mutual protection was added a propagating zeal now displayed by enthusiasts of that section, and much stimulated of late by the immense consumption of cotton and cotton fabrics in the world's market. South Carolina, Georgia, and the adjacent States fed those noisy spindles which in the mother-country and here multiplied so rapidly that the annual production ill satisfied their hungry maw. The advanced price of cotton and other staples, such as rice and sugar, which necessitated toil in the broiling sun and exposure such as only blacks could well endure, had created, therefore, an unprecedented demand for suitable lands for their culture and suitable laborers to till them. An extensive trade was developing in consequence between the

* See Benton's Abridgment; Annals of Congress; 6 Hildreth, 636. Among those who strongly favored this bill in the House were Speaker Clay, Baldwin of Pennsylvania, and Cobb of Georgia. Holmes and Mason of Massachusetts, also Storrs of New York, supported it as a sacrifice for national harmony. Strong, Whitman and Fuller of Massachusetts, Livermore of New Hampshire, Williams of Connecticut, and Sergeant and others from Pennsylvania opposed it. Burrill, Roberts, and King spoke against the bill in the Senate. Smith took them to task. This measure passed the House, 84 to 69. The Senate vote upon the bill, with amendments, stood 17 to 13, Otis and Sandford voting yea, and the Delaware Senators nay.

southern Mississippi region and parts of the old border States where it was found more profitable to breed slaves for market than raise produce. Gangs of negroes were to be seen driven from the Atlantic slope to the Gulf of Mexico. An intelligent English traveller and philanthropist found that the very name of New Orleans struck terror to the soul of an American slave, and that the general belief prevailed through this benighted element of the community that instead of taking negroes to Africa each vessel sent by the Colonization Society would steer for the Gulf of Mexico and the dreaded port as soon as it got out to sea.*

Hence an obvious tendency in States thus interested to band together, not only with a fixed purpose to resist emancipation, but so as to procure slaves wherever they might without open offence to other Christian communities. Hence, too, an invention by the staple raiser of various sophistries which might prop up the institution and palliate the guilt of slaveholding, if guilt it must be called; none of them at this time more popular or more pernicious than that to spread our domestic slavery over a larger surface of land would alleviate the mischief. For, conceding with Jefferson that to move a slave from one State to another would make no slave of a human being who was not a slave before, what must be the logical result of spreading the contagious ambition, or rather the social necessity, of being a white slaveholder, through new settlements, but to further the propagation of slaves, in order to gratify that ambition or social necessity? And admitting that increased propagation, who will ask whether the supply comes by breeding or importation?

It deserves, however, to be said of a statesman whose influence in moulding American character was so remarkable that even his erroneous maxims, of which this was one, crept into common speech, that Jefferson did not to his dying day cease to deplore the existence of slavery, nor did he believe in African colonization as an adequate

* Hodgson's Travels, 1819–20.

means of ridding the United States of the system. To him the association which prosecuted this undertaking was no more than a missionary society, having humane and unaggressive ends. Those ends theoretically he favored; and emancipation still captivated his fancy, notwithstanding the alluring influences of plantation surroundings benumbed his judgment, and he became less of an abolitionist to be more of a southerner. Abolition he desired as essential to the physical and moral progress of the American people; and, as a means of accomplishing abolition, the gradual removal of our entire black population to some friendly asylum, where they might be established under national protection as a free, independent, and separate people. But the plan of sending the negroes to Africa, he predicted, would not succeed, and he stated figures which proved that the cost was too enormous. Emancipate black children, on the other hand, the moment they are born; keep them with their mothers, on due compensation, until their services are worth their maintenance; then send them off to some port within a practicable distance, leaving the old negro stock to die off on southern soil in the ordinary course of nature. This was the solution, and the only peaceful one, which seemed to him possible. He had sketched the plan in his early Notes on Virginia; its details he perfected in his old age. The primary fund for defraying the expenses of nourishment and transportation, as thus stated, might be derived by this nation from the proceeds of the public lands. As for the asylum to which the young should be sent, St. Domingo, by 1824 independent and with an exclusively black population, was ready and open. A million and a half people, now in slavery in the United States, could be controlled for the operation, in any case a painful one, whose difficulties every year of delay must inevitably increase. "Who could estimate its blessed effects?" wrote the sage, two years before his death, and long after the present territorial agitation was over. "I leave this to those who will live to see their accomplishment,

and to enjoy a beatitude forbidden to my age. But I leave it with this admonition, to rise and be doing."*

We are now prepared to enter upon the narrative of the Missouri controversy, precursor by two generations of probably the grandest and saddest civil strife recorded in the annals of the nineteenth century. Fought out and settled upon the legislative arena at Washington, though agitating our whole people meanwhile, this earlier controversy covered three distinct spaces of time: (1) The second session of the 15th Congress; (2) the first session; and (3) the second session of the 16th Congress. The first of these discussions was identified with the Hall on Capitol Hill, which served the temporary needs of Congress; † the second and third with the renovated wings of the Capitol, where the two Houses resumed their permanent abode. The immediate question at issue concerned the admission of Missouri into the Union as a State, released from territorial constraints. But under the circumstances this question involved another of transcendent magnitude; namely, whether the great north-west territory comprised in the Louisiana purchase should be consecrated to freedom or desecrated by slavery. For as the case stood at the outset, were Missouri now to be admitted into the Union with permissive slavery, simply because a majority of its inhabitants so desired, Congress abdicated all constitutional control in this respect over territory purchased and paid for by the United States, in favor of a sort of squatter sovereignty among the settlers. It was inopportune, as to Missouri, at least, to have deferred such an issue, as happened to be the case, until a sufficient population knocked for admission; but tardy action was better than

* 7 Jefferson's Works, letter to Jared Sparks, February 4, 1824, with reference to an article on Liberia in the North American Review. And see Finch's Travels, 1824. Madison's Writings, 1819, show that Madison likewise approved the objects of the Colonization Society, but did not think that a general removal of the slave population to Liberia could be accomplished unless government would bear the expense, which, however, he greatly desired.

† See *supra*, p. 3.

non-action; and for after-born States west of the Mississippi the precedent would be momentous. Freedom and slavery could not dwell together; if the latter social condition prevailed the former could not; and if the first settlers were to fight among themselves for the mastery, how many maimed and bleeding sisters, who sought the constellation of States, might expire in the wilderness?

We have seen that when the bill which first proposed erecting Missouri into a State came up for action in Congress the balance of power between slave and free States had been lost; that an amendment to this bill restricting the right to hold slaves was carried in the House but lost in the Senate; and that in consequence of the ensuing disagreement the bill itself was lost.* The Senate debate is not preserved; but that of the House, brief though it was, is shown by the speeches reported to have been eager and exciting. Taylor and Tallmadge stated the argument strongly for the restrictionists, and Scott, Missouri's territorial delegate, for the right of unqualified admission. Upon such a controversy, the strong point in Missouri's favor was that her population and present condition entitled her already to the essential rights of self-government; for she had passed the period of nurture, and was turning majority. Hence, to require the assent of her people to such fundamental conditions, thereby disarranging her social institutions at so late a day, was to stretch a Congressional right beyond former precedent, and put a premium upon the nation's negligence. Nevertheless, the federal constitution never conceded that newly-formed States of the future should be admitted into the Union as unreservedly and with so profound a respect for co-ordinate consent as its original members. Such a concession would be inconsistent with a due regulation of the national territory and the educational process applicable to infant settlements. And, as the restrictionists justly contended, 1819.

* *Supra*, pp. 101–103.

Congress had the discretion to admit or not admit, and meantime to regulate public territory for which the Union had paid, as in fact belonging to the Union; unlike the case of one of the old thirteen, Rhode Island, for instance, whose delay in ratifying the constitution left it for a year outside the Union as virtually a foreign and independent commonwealth.

It was too late now to deny that Congress had power to impose conditions precedent on the admission of new States. Such conditions, as part of a fundamental compact, were to be found in all of these new State constitutions; and if Congress had not legislated at discretion concerning slavery generally in territory east of the Mississippi, this was because the introduction of such a condition precedent was determined in each case by the express terms under which the old States had ceded the territory upon which the State was erected, and the Union had accepted the cession. The act admitting Louisiana had various fundamental conditions precedent, and so had the Missouri bill as presented; that, for instance, which related to the free navigation of the Mississippi river. The advocates of the Missouri bill sought refuge from this argument by citing the treaty with France which made cession of Louisiana to the United States. Its inhabitants were to be "incorporated in the Union and admitted as soon as possible to enjoy all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States," meantime being protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion. But this language did not fit the case, and even if it did, the admission of new States was a legislative act, in which the House had a right to participate.

A discussion like this would not probably be calmly or temperately carried on. On the contrary, the two sides of the House leaped quickly into high flame; and though the supporters of the Tallmadge amendment assured the opposition that they meant only to prevent the extension of slavery to new territory, desiring no abolition under circumstances inconsistent with law and the safety of the

white men, the other side hotly imputed to them a wish to force manumission upon the slave States and stir up a servile war. To Tallmadge, Taylor, Livermore, and Fuller were opposed Clay, Philip Barbour, Cobb, Pindall and Scott. Clay, with a characteristic levity upon the general merits of the slave question, which at a much later crisis of his career cost him his most poignant disappointment, lent himself to the loosest sophisms of the day. Other Southern speakers avowed that their slaves were contented and happy, and that they themselves slept quietly in their beds without the fear of insurrection; but perceiving a black face in the gallery, one of them interposed with alarm to check discussion until this intruder could be turned out.

Taylor made a striking anti-slavery speech. The central figure, however, in this memorable debate was James Tallmadge, who advocated the amendment which he himself had proposed, with courage, forcible argument, ready wit, felicitous allusions, and an eloquence which shamed if it could not disarm. Like Ames in the Jay treaty debate, he pressed his point with the pathos of one in frail health, whose present appeal must be his last ; and for the moment, and while that appeal was fresh, the House repelled slave encroachment as it did not soon again.*

The black face in the gallery was not the only ominous incident which sent a long ray into the merits of the discussion and influenced the final vote in the House. While this first Missouri debate was in progress, the clanking of chains was heard without and members ran to the window and entrance. A slave-driver of villainous aspect passed the door of this unpretentious building, the temporary Hall

* Annals of Congress, 1819 ; Niles's Register. Though Tallmadge, at this time and when scarcely more than thirty years old, was delicate in health, foreign travel and a change of occupation appear to have fairly restored him. See *supra*, p. 103. Though never again taking a part in national affairs, he was as a private citizen identified with American industries and the foundation of the University of New York, and to some extent with the politics of his native State.

of Congress, turning the high road at Capitol Hill on his way west. He drove before him some fifteen half-naked blacks collected in the pursuit of his traffic; the men handcuffed and chained to one another in front, women and children fetching up the rear. As this piteous flock shuffled by to the dull music of their manacles, some dusky being, perchance, stealing a furtive glance at the stars and stripes which floated above the roof so proudly, our national legislators looked upon the scene. If the flag which meant to protect the oppressed was thus to become the symbol of oppression, if yonder rising temple was to be dedicated with human sacrifices, if emigration must take its westward course, driving fellow-men and cattle together, would not in God's good time come the day of righteous retribution?

March–September. Tallmadge was no political seer, nor could he have contrived at this time his personal advancement. When as a humane legislator, and in the ordinary course of debate, whether upon consultation or not, he offered his amendment to the Missouri bill, its portentous import was perhaps not clearly comprehended. But the fire kindled by this first debate soon spread into a blaze, crackling and roaring through the vast area of the land. The dispute, which Congress adjourned without settling, was taken up by the press, by voters at the polls, by State legislatures, by the people in mass meetings. Anxious and restless in the midst of the sudden financial panic which has been described; pricked at the conscience by the late revelation that a traffic forbidden by law and denounced by the Christian world had been secretly revived to stock the south-western country with laborers; alarmed at the defiant tone which slaveholders had assumed in the recent debates; shamed that recreant America should stand forth, amid the jeers of monarchies, holding in one hand the charter of Independence and with the other brandishing a whip over the back of a negro,—the north, shaking off the bonds of slumber, forbade in a voice of

thunder the further advance of slavery into the national domain. The American convention for promoting the abolition of slavery, which had sunk out of notice since 1808, convened once more at Philadelphia, Oct. 5. delegates being present from various States. Public meetings were held in the chief towns of the middle and eastern States, at which eminent citizens, without distinction of party, spoke and drew up resolutions which were unanimously adopted; committees of correspondence were established; and the whole tenor November-December. of proceedings served to confirm the new Congress and the people in the right and expediency of resisting all further extension of slavery into the territories, inasmuch as Congress had the constitutional power, and ought to exercise it. Webster stated the argument forcibly at a Boston meeting, in which William Eustis, Josiah Quincy, William Tudor, and James T. Austin participated ; so, too, did Horace Binney in Philadelphia, Jared Ingersoll, William Rawle, Robert Walsh, and Robert Ralston being similarly conspicuous. At Baltimore and Wilmington respectable citizens, many of whom had hitherto taken no active part in politics assembled for a like purpose. All through the summer northern newspapers had discussed the Missouri question, and when the various State legislatures met, towards the close of the year, those of the middle section and Ohio promptly passed resolutions opposing all slavery extension; Pennsylvania leading off, and Governor Clinton recommending to the legislature of New York a course which Federalists, Clintonians, and anti-Clintonians vied in adopting.*

All such public expressions at the north seemed spontaneous enough in the excitement of the hour. But there was a political force working beneath the surface that gave to this popular movement, which so many out of national influence espoused, a peculiar impetus and direction. That force was Federal in its basis, negative in the main

* 17 Niles's Register.

as to Monroe's administration and policy, immutably jealous of southern ascendency. King, venerable in years and courtly of aspect, was its chief inspiration, as befitted one of his commanding talents and vast and varied public experience, reaching back to revolutionary times. Contemporaries, indeed, agree in ascribing to this sage from a State singularly divided in politics, though rapidly rising to national leadership, an ambition of astonishing vitality; and bitterly enough did Jefferson inveigh against him at this time as one who was ready to risk the Union for any chance of restoring his party to power and wriggling to the head of it.* The last heated stricture was too severe; but that King set on foot and organized, in the summer of 1819, the concert of measures which awoke the north for a renewal of the Missouri struggle cannot be doubted; and, whatever possible alloy may have mingled with the pure metal, posterity owes the praise which his own age denied him. The first Missouri debate disclosed, in fact, an issue, and the only one on which the slave power might and ought to be unitedly opposed by the conscience and intelligence of the Union; the only issue, moreover, which could stir the sluggish pool into which the old parties were slowly subsiding. This was no feigned issue, but a genuine one, which the free north was compelled to meet by force of natural circumstances, and that tardily enough.

Southern leaders saw with dismay their political allies at the north falling in with new men and old malcontents upon the Missouri protest, and a fresh and portentous issue looming up which threatened to engulf the southern democracy, if not to shake to pieces the social fabric upon which southern interests rested. But the instinct of self-preservation, aside from the propagating ambition, banded southerners together on their own side. Accepting the line

* See Jefferson's Writings, 1820; Monroe Correspondence. All of the contemporary Virginia statesmen, as also Benton and John Quincy Adams, agree concerning the political nature of this Missouri agitation and King's particular agency in it. See 1 Benton's Thirty Years' View; John Quincy Adams's Diary, 1820.

south of the Potomac and Ohio as theirs, they maintained the effort to outflank freedom beyond the Mississippi; befriending with much zeal the cause of Missouri, as that of an outraged sovereign community. Crawford, at a 4th of July celebration in Washington, volunteered as a toast, "the admission of new States on the principles of the federal constitution, that they should be Republican." The legislatures of Virginia and Kentucky led off not long after with resolutions which deplored all imposition of social restrictions by Congress as the condition of Missouri's admission. What could be accomplished practically by such a course? was asked. Would force be used to compel Missouri to emancipate? If so, the South would make her cause, which was the cause of self-government, their own, and fight with her. Would she be left to regulate her own affairs outside of the Union? Then she could afford to wait until a repentant legislature would receive her on terms compatible with the self-respect and independence of a sovereign State.

This new anti-slavery movement, which for the moment so closely united Republicans and Federalists of the free States, men of whatever political antecedents, took its rise in the middle section, and New York was its banner State. Fanaticism, should the cause gain violent headway, might threaten slavery in its citadel; but at present there was no fanaticism, nothing but resistance within strictly constitutional lines. Territorial aggression was opposed: but no one meant to interfere with slavery in a single State where the institution still existed. Slave-trade abolition had, however, failed of its main purpose; the system of slave-labor was not dying out but spreading; and now that spread should be stopped. Congress had the right and the responsibility in the premises; Congress should therefore extend the ordinance of 1787 to all the territory west of the Mississippi.

While the southern van was thus hastening to the support of Missouri and the threatened advance posts of

slavery across the great river, and while the north rallied for a crusade against slave extension which ought to have commenced fifteen years earlier,* the sixteenth Congress came together; its members fresh from the contact with earnest constituents, and constantly implored by memorial or legislative resolution, as the session advanced, to stand firmly. The second and most momentous Missouri controversy now began.

Already, however, had the country moved one step towards a settlement since the first discussion of the subject. Another northern free State was now ready to be admitted as an offset to Missouri, thus restoring the old equipoise between freedom and slavery. Long before the war of 1812 had been cherished the project of separating the district of Maine from Massachusetts; and so strongly during that war did the two members of one Commonwealth antagonize in feeling that the project of dismemberment was readily revived on the return of peace. In that intense State pride of which Massachusetts Federalism had taken advantage, to the detriment of national relations, these eastern counties did not share, for their inhabitants were chiefly Republicans and marched to the music of the Union. This schism of "down easters," as they were styled, a peculiar type of the New Englander, shrewd, frugal, and simple, Massachusetts resisted, more to avoid the mortification of dismemberment than because of any poignant grief; and by the spring of 1819, despite the opposition of Quincy and others, an act permitting

1819. June. separation was carried; the dominant party in the old section of Massachusetts feeling reconciled to rule the fewer for the sake of keeping a firmer footing in State politics. This act gave the assent of Massachusetts

July. to the erection of Maine into an independent State, should the people of Maine vote favorably and Congress admit it within a stated time. The people of Maine having pronounced for separation, by 17,000 to 7,000, a con-

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* See vol. ii, p. 57.

vention was called to form a State Constitution. This constitution, though modelled after that of Massachusetts, extended the right of suffrage, and abolished pecuniary qualifications for holding office and the compulsory support of religion, all in accordance with the more liberal ideas of the age. It was accepted at the polls by a vote nearly unanimous; and the convention reassembling, resolved to support William King, its presiding officer, as the first governor of the State.* Oct. 11.

By the time, therefore, that Congress commenced its sittings in the renovated Capitol, two new States sought admission, one from the extreme east, the other from what was then far west; Maine with a free, Missouri with a pro-slavery constitution; the former seeking the sisterhood by a peculiar process of dismemberment, never before so clearly applied (though for this as well as the junction of States formerly separated our constitution provides); the latter as the fruition of territorial growth. On the day following the reading of the President's message, Maine's memorial was presented in both houses. On the same day delegate Scott presented in the House a memorial from Missouri which prayed for admission into the Union on an equal footing with the original States. These memorials were referred. The bill which declared Alabama finally admitted having been hurried through both branches, so as not to permit of a possible advantage to the anti-slavery side, north and south prepared for a struggle which it was felt would be decisive. Dec. 8.

A House committee which had been appointed to consider the expediency of prohibiting slavery in the territories west of the Mississippi could not agree and asked to be discharged; whereupon Taylor, of New York, one of that committee, who now led the anti-slavery wing, of which he had been a prominent member the previous winter, moved that the House order the report of a bill embodying such a prohibition. Objection to this was made; Dec. 28.

* See Hough's Constitutions; 17 Niles's Register

but pending the discussion of the subject, and before direct action could be taken on Missouri's admission, the Maine bill, which afforded no point of dispute upon its independent merits, passed the House and went to the Senate.

1820. Jan. 3.

In the House the friends of Missouri had manœuvred in vain, being in the minority, to bring the bills for the two States in some way together. But the point they strove for was presently gained in the Senate ; for here, the anti-slavery side being the weaker, James Barbour procured a commitment of the Maine bill to the judiciary committee, whence it re-appeared with a clause tacked to it for the unrestricted admission of Missouri. By this unworthy finesse, which coupled the two States to share in the same dubious chances of admission, the southerners brought the lead into the more favorable branch, making the Senate in fact the chief forum of discussion. A motion to re-commit and separate the Maine and Missouri sections of the bill was lost, by 18 to 25 ; and now commenced the great debate of the session, which lasted about a month ; the minority striving, meanwhile, but unsuccessfully, to add to the clause for admitting Missouri a prohibition of slavery.*

Jan. 4–14.

1820. Jan. 18–Feb. 17.

The great speech of the session on the side of Missouri and the south was William Pinkney's. Maryland sentiment had been sufficiently divided to assure an auditory, ready to hang breathless upon the utterances of a Senator and favorite son, second to no American of his times as a cultured orator. The overarching walls of the new Senate-chamber seemed all too close for the mingled crowd, composed of legislators, ladies, and citizens, which overflowed into the lobby, the outer hall, and the staircases ; the House itself adjourning early, that members might get a chance to listen. Cabinet dignitaries and diplomatists were to be seen in the gallery throng ; ladies in rich toilets upon the floor. Pinkney, whose foible was to be thought

* Annals of Congress.

an extempore speaker, never met a great occasion without great premeditated effort ; and studied in dress and manner though he appeared, even to the foppishness of an old beau, with garments of faultless cut, delicately tinted gloves, to be drawn off and on, and ruffles of superfine texture, he handled his subject like a master of forensic art. Unrivalled in his day as an advocate, he now carried advocacy into his statesmanship, determining to state his case as strongly as possible, overstate perhaps, but never so that the argument should be weaker than the cause itself. Pinkney's art lay in appearing impromptu and easy, where all had been laboriously worked out ; in carefully embellishing arguments which had been carefully constructed, burying his battery under nosegays ; in making under whatever circumstances the momentary impression desired, while concealing the method of producing it. On this occasion the south and slaveholders had full reason to be grateful to him. Amplifying a passage from Burke, he apostrophized the slave-owner as capable of the highest devotion, love of liberty, and self-government, and upon the main question he urged all that was tenable and much that was not. It was a gorgeous, electrifying exhibition of oratory; and more than this, probably Pinkney himself never felt it. King was the only northern man in the Senate, or indeed in Congress, who could fitly encounter such an adversary ; he did so, and as he stood before his desk, dignified, earnest, and grave in manner, though not vehement, chaste in language, disdaining the tropes and studious graces of Pinkney, a model of the olden times in dress and attitude, his southern auditors gnawed their lips and clenched their fists. Two speeches delivered by King in the first Missouri controversy, and printed and distributed by general request, contained the constitutional argument upon which the new party rested its case. Little could now be added to its substance; but King exposed by his ingenious analysis many of the cunning fallacies by which the northern consciences were now assailed. This Prospero was agitated by his own

tempest, in the midst of which, so far from losing direction, he had just been re-elected to the Senate by a voice in his own State nearly unanimous.*

Launched upon its second famous controversy, its galleries often crowded with colored persons, the House, after some dallying with its own Missouri bill, concluded to put to sea, following in the wake of the Senate discussion, rather than await the return of the Maine bill as amended. An angry but monotonous ocean was soon reached. With the moral, the legal, the political aspects of the Missouri question exhaustively discussed in the fifteenth Congress, it was found impossible to keep the legislative or the public mind on the further tension of an argument when the time approached for action.

Save for Pinkney and King in the Senate, there were few speakers on all Capitol Hill longer worth listening to. Tallmadge was gone. The question had been discussed in the press, on the stump, at public meetings. Taylor had already produced his strongest impression; Clay inclined to silence, and refused to be reported. While the public

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* See 1 Benton; J. Q. Adams's Diary, February, 1820; Annals of Congress.

Seaton's Biography gives a lively sketch of the scene at these Missouri debates. The ladies crowded into the Senate chamber, not less than a hundred of them being on the floor, whenever Pinkney was expected to speak, encompassing the Senators to the exclusion of Representatives and foreign ministers. The gallant Vice-President, as it appears, invited a small party of ladies to take the floor; and as soon as the company in the gallery saw them comfortably seated on the sofas, with warm footstools and other luxuries, they left their seats above and came flocking in, to the annoyance of many of the Senators, Tompkins himself appearing disconcerted. The next day a note was affixed to the door, excluding all ladies not introduced by some Senator; but this rule still permitted the fair sex to be largely represented.

John Randolph, in the course of one of the House debates on the Missouri question, seeing the floor and gallery crowded by these fair listeners, rose, and pointing his long index finger, said in his peculiarly shrill voice: "Mr. Speaker, what pray are all these women doing here, so out of place in this arena? Sir, they had much better be at home attending to their knitting!" This harsh reproof appears to have thinned the audience for a few days following. Ib.

complained of constant reiteration, the tactics of this session, the votes, the management of the Maine and Missouri bills must more worthily enchain the attention.*

There was no serious menace of civil war and disunion. The southern representatives formed an impenetrable phalanx, picking off all the northern votes possible, but under all circumstances voting together. Missouri herself, it was speculated, would if kept out form a government, and dare Congress to coerce her. While Pennsylvania had solemnly appealed to sister States "to refuse to covenant with crime," Virginia, with equal solemnity, pronounced that the federal constitution conferred no right to make emancipation the condition on which new States were to be admitted; her House of Delegates even threatening in the heat of the moment to "interpose," if need be, employing a phrase of treasonable import, which, it is fair to add, was afterwards struck out. Far-seeing statesmen of an imaginative cast were appalled; to John Quincy Adams it seemed as if the present question were to be the title-page to a great tragic volume; Jefferson had similar forebodings; Clay whispered in private company that this Union would in five years be split into three confederacies. Monroe, on the contrary, was tranquil, apprehending, as he said, no serious danger; for he firmly believed there would be found a compromise satisfactory to all parties.† And to many other minds, clear, dispassionate, sagacious, not profound nor pretending to gift of divination, such had appeared the probable exit of the discussion.‡ For already appeared three strong reasons for supposing that northern representatives would not insist upon the whole anti-slavery programme as to Missouri: (1) The almost insuperable difficulties in the way of applying to any populous slave

* Newspapers of the day show facetious punsters talking of the "Misery debate."

† See John Q. Adams's Diary, 1820; Samuel Smith, in Des Forges MSS.

‡ See Niles's Register, January 29, 1820.

region the discipline of emancipation. (2) The desire of many from their section that the admission of Maine as a new northern State should not be delayed. (3) Northern overtures of one kind or another for sharing the trans-Mississippi region, like the original area of the Union, between freedom and slavery.

The two latter reasons we may dwell upon for a moment. The act of the Massachusetts legislature which permitted the inhabitants of the Maine district to form a separate State government expressly required the assent of Congress prior to March 4, 1820. Non-action, therefore, for a few weeks longer might undo the work of the Maine Convention, and throw into confusion the whole arrangement for dismembering Massachusetts, to which the consent of the parent legislature had been so reluctantly given. As for dividing the Louisiana region into a slaveholding and non-slaveholding portion, Taylor himself had in the fifteenth Congress offered such a proviso to the bill for organizing the Territory of Arkansas, namely, that there should be no slavery in any part of the territories of the United States north of 36° 30′, the northern boundary proposed for that territory; a proposition which, as Livermore conceived, was made "in the true spirit of compromise," but which, for want of support, the proposer withdrew.* Early in the present session that same idea was broached, with, however, a reservation of Missouri; and the more moderate of southern representatives prepared to yield the point in good time, satisfied with gaining one grand slave State north of the line, and anxious to remove from national politics an inflammable theme, lest parties should reorganize on the dangerous lines of sectional interest; indeed, this sudden fanaticism (for such it seemed) among northern republicans, and particularly the defection of the Pennsylvania democracy, which Virginia, like a Balaam, had ridden securely for twenty years, alarmed the south more than its pride dared confess.

* Annals of Congress; Niles's Register.

Scarcely had the Senate refused to uncouple Maine and Missouri in the pending measure, when Thomas, of Illinois, one of those who had voted with the majority, introduced a bill for prohibiting the introduction of slavery north and west of the proposed State of Missouri. After the decision not to impose an anti-slavery restriction upon Missouri's admission,* Thomas again brought his proposition forward in the shape of a mollifying amendment. It was held back, however, a fortnight longer, until, after a final passage between King and Pinkney, followed by a few scattering speeches, the decisive vote for uniting Maine and Missouri in one bill was carried by the slender majority of 23 to 21. Thomas, who had now demonstrated his ability to make a tie, offered his amendment once more, which in fact was substantially the famous compromise clause as it stands recorded; and after the failure of an attempt by Trimble, of Ohio, to exclude slavery from all the trans-Mississippi territory except Louisiana and Missouri, it was carried 34 to 10. The whole bill, with this compromise rider attached, then passed the Senate, 24 to 20, all the slave-holding States, together with Delaware and Illinois, voting for it, and in that shape was returned to the House.†

1820. Jan. 17, 18.

Feb. 1.

Feb. 3.

Feb. 16.

Feb. 17, 18.

The House had meantime been engaged in a prolix discussion in Committee of the Whole upon its own Missouri

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* Annals of Congress; Niles's Register. Both the Senators from Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana voted in favor of the restriction; the Senators from New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut divided; and against restriction, besides Van Dyke of Delaware, were found both the Senators of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Illinois. This vote, by almost a clean geographical line, stood 27 to 16. Otis, who had gone with the slaveholders in the first Missouri contest, as though to prove himself a man of national sentiment to those who doubted him, now supported King. The Hartford constituents of Lanman, recently chosen to the Senate as a Connecticut "tolerationist," hung him in effigy for siding with the slaveholders on this question.

†Annals of Congress; Niles's Register.

bill, to which an amendment restricting slavery was pending. As in the Senate the weary argument, lapsing from moral to legal and constitutional grounds, dragged heavily. When the bill for admitting Maine came back with the Senate amendments attached, of which we have spoken, Taylor, in order that the matter might be promptly disposed of, moved that these amendments be disagreed to. Scott preferred committing the bill as it stood to the Committee of the Whole on Missouri, that both might be discussed together; but every day's delay was so perilous to Maine, now that the third of March drew near, that the House heeded the anxious, almost piteous appeal of Holmes and his colleagues, so that Scott's motion was rejected, Taylor's object prevailed, and after a brief postponement of the subject the House disagreed, 93 to 72, to the clause admitting Missouri, voted down the compromise clause by 159 to 18, and sending back the original bill for admitting Maine shorn of all amendments, pursued the Missouri debate as before. The Senate, refusing to recede, asked a committee of conference, which was granted; Clay, the speaker, who deprecated the present agitation, taking care to appoint, on the part of the House, men, who, like himself, inclined to peace and a compromise. The Senate conferees were Thomas, Pinkney, and Barbour; those on the part of the House, Holmes, Taylor, Lowndes, Parker of Massachusetts, and Kinsey.

Feb. 19.

Feb. 23.

Pending their momentous conference, the Missouri bill, at length reported to the House from the Committee of the Whole with the further introduction of slaves prohibited, was put upon its passage; Clay and Storrs striving, but in vain, to soften the prohibitory clause into a recommendation. The House ordered the bill engrossed in its anti-slavery shape, 93 to 84, and by a final vote of 91 to 82 passed and sent it to the Senate.*

Feb. 29-March 1.

The first day of Spring saw, therefore, the Missouri question brought to its crisis in Congress; the majorities of the

* Annals of Congress.

two Houses diametrically opposed as to admitting that State with or without an anti-slavery condition. But the joint committee of conference were already at work, and the air was thick with rumors of a compromise. The very next day, in fact, March 2d, that compromise was effected; the Senate, in a word, carrying out their whole programme, which, in reality, embraced an offer of compromise through the Thomas amendment, yielding, nevertheless, a courteous separation of the Maine and Missouri bills, now that their junction remained a mere matter of form. The condition that Missouri should prohibit slavery by its constitution, and enter the Union virtually as a free State, a condition demanded by the previous and the present House, and the source of the whole controversy, was thus completely abandoned. Louisiana, Missouri, and prospectively Arkansas were yielded up to slave institutions; but, agreeably to the Thomas amendment, slavery was forever prohibited in the remaining part of the Louisiana cession lying north of latitude 36° 30′. The ponderous jaws of legislation, which usually grind so slowly, may be made to disgorge a session's grist in a few hours; and so was it now. In the Senate the Missouri bill from the House was amended by striking out the anti-slavery proviso, 27 to 15, Otis and King voting with the minority; and with the Thomas territorial amendment inserted the bill was returned to the House for concurrence. Simultaneously with its reappearance in that body, Holmes, from the Committee of Conference, reported the compromise programme agreed upon, which, after a stormy debate, lasting until evening, prevailed. Eighteen northern men co-operated to carry it out, more in truth than were positively necessary; for the Taylor prohibition of slavery in Missouri which two days before had commanded a majority of nine on a line nearly geographical, was now discarded by 90 to 87.*

March 2.

* Holmes, Mason of Boston, Storrs, Bloomfield, Baldwin, and McLane voted in this, as in the previous Congress, with the slaveholders. Five had joined them of new members: Hill and Shaw of Massachusetts,

After this test of strength the Thomas proviso was easily carried, the vote standing 134 to 42, nearly all the northern members, in fact, accepting it while 37 of those voting against it were southerners who, like Randolph, denied altogether the right of Congress to put territorial restrictions upon slavery. The Maine bill being released from pledge the next day passed the Senate easily, on its distinct merits, and the two acts went at once to the President, that for the admission of Maine receiving his signature before night. Leap-year might have been thought a god-send to the northeastern community in this instance, for there was not another day to spare.*

March 3.

Not without some hope of blocking the Maine bill by dilatory tactics and so frustrating the whole scheme of compromise, Randolph, the day after the House had passed the Missouri bill, moved its reconsideration. But this motion, when first made, the nimble Speaker declared out of order, as the journal had not been read; and by the time the clerk finished reading and Randolph rose again the bill was no longer before the House, having been spirited away to the Senate from the Speaker's table. With this sleight of hand which envenomed a controversy in which Clay and Randolph had found themselves at variance, began a long bitterness in their personal relations. Whether or no the Missouri compromise was as Randolph with his inimitable slang termed it, a "dirty bargain," helped on by eighteen northern "dough-faces,"—the latter appellative, by the way, sticking to our politics as long as slavery itself lasted,—it certainly was not consum-

March 3.

Foot of Connecticut, Meigs of New York, and Fullerton of Pennsylvania. By March 2d, Eddy of Rhode Island, Stephens of Connecticut, and Kinsey and Smith of New Jersey, were induced to vote for the compromise; and three others, Edwards of Connecticut, and Case and Tompkins of New York, aided the result by absenting themselves. See 6 Hildreth; Annals of Congress.

* The act admitting Maine was dated March 3, 1820. The date of the Missouri act, with its celebrated compromise clause, was March 6, 1820. See U. S. Stats. at Large.

mated without a piece of parliamentary trickery more clever than commendable.*

Monroe, who, long perceiving the drift of the two Houses towards a compromise, had consulted the three ex-Presidents by letter,† now laid the Missouri bill before his cabinet, propounding two questions, to which he asked written responses, suitable for preservation in the public archives: (1) Had Congress a constitutional right to prohibit slavery in a territory? (2) Did the compromise section of this bill, which interdicted slavery "forever" in territory north of 36° 30′, apply only to the territorial condition of the tract referred to, or did it mean to extend the prohibition to the States which might be erected therein? Upon the first question the cabinet, which now included Smith Thompson, of New York, as the successor of Crowninshield in the Navy Department, were unanimously agreed in the affirmative, notwithstanding Crawford, Calhoun, and Wirt could find no express power given by the constitution, and Wirt was, as usual, decidedly against the theory of implied powers. Such, indeed, was the obvious belief of a large majority in both Houses, as shown by the recent votes, not to quote from Madison and other speakers on the floor of Congress as early as 1790.‡ But the second question was less easily disposed of. Adams thought the interdiction "forever" must apply essentially to States as well as territories, inasmuch as the people would have no right to sanction slavery when they came to form a State; and because, moreover, whatever a State legislature may afterwards do, it cannot by a rightful act establish a system so repugnant to those ideas, fundamental in our system, that men are created equal, and that the powers of government are justly derived from the consent of those governed. In the course of a running conver- March 3.

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary; Annals of Congress.
† Monroe MSS.
‡ See vol. i, p. 149.

sation, Crawford controverted these views in the cabinet meeting, while Wirt and the President himself inclined to support them.* But at the suggestion of Calhoun, who was averse to committing the cabinet to writing at all on this precise point,—an issue so delicate, in fact, that the cautious Madison had already intimated in confidence that to make the "forever" an interdict upon future States seemed to him a stretch of constitutional power for the sake of pacifying the country,—Monroe modified it to an inquiry whether the anti-slavery proviso of the bill was constitutional or not. To this, of course, each could respond yes, notwithstanding his own mental reservation as to the scope of the word "forever;" and on the strength of this apparent unanimity the President signed the Missouri bill on the 6th of March, the several answers being filed by that date in the Department of State, from which depository they have since singularly disappeared.†

Adams, who, like Madison, has earned the gratitude of history by devoting to the conscientious diary of inner events the labor which most statesmen bestow, if at all, upon the ephemeral task of collecting their own speeches and documents from the vast reservoir of public print into which every annalist may drop his bucket (as though to

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* Monroe MSS.; Madison's letter of Feb. 23, 1820, to Monroe.

† See J. Q. Adams's Diary, March 3-6, 1820. Adams records that the opinions of all the cabinet officers except himself differ only as they assign their reason for thinking the anti-slavery section constitutional, because they consider it as applying only to the territorial term; Adams barely giving his opinion, without stating explanatory reasons. The editor of the Diary, Hon. Charles Francis Adams, observes in a note that when, in consequence of publishing this passage, a search was made in the State Department for those papers, nothing was found but what appeared to be an envelope referring to them as enclosed.

See Monroe MSS.; 2 Benton's Thirty Years' View, 141, for further proof that this cabinet meeting was held as above, and in entire confirmation of the entries made in Adams's Diary. Calhoun in 1838 denied that he had assented to the doctrine that Congress had a constitutional power to prohibit slavery in the territories, but the proofs are against him. As regards the missing papers, it is further shown by an index at the State Department that these answers requested by Monroe were duly filed among the archives of that office.

read public men rightly their motives publicly stated should be the only study), describes his walk with Calhoun from the cabinet meeting at which this Missouri discussion occurred. Calhoun, to whom at this time Adams put out much of a heart which economized its beatings, appreciating, as he did, the noble and generous traits of a colleague not yet perverted by ambition nor soured by disappointment, praised the principles which his colleague had avowed as just and noble. "But in the South," as he frankly confessed, "these principles of equality are understood to apply only to white men; and so degrading in my own section seems mere manual labor, that were I, the most popular man in my district, to keep a white servant instead of a black one, I would be irretrievably ruined in character and influence."* Thus, truly, had southern slaveholders come to confound the ideas of servitude and labor, and brought it up to a point of sacred honor to support a system conducive to a patrician pride which reason and the conscience could not declare to be just. Already had slavery proved more powerful an amalgam than freedom; for while the course of the North was in a sense missionary and proselyting, leaving many lukewarm, that of the South was felt to involve to the master race liberty, property, life itself. Southerners knew that the sentiment of the civilized world was against them; but against that sentiment they concentrated their strength whenever external menace alarmed them; and this with the same military discipline that a South Carolina town would employ in strengthening patrols when the drum-tap announced that some slave plot was imminent. The price of slavery to the slave-owner was ceaseless and secret vigilance. No wonder, then, that the conscience men of the north failed to convince their southern brethren that they meant restriction and not invasion. No wonder that weight of reason and argument failed to persuade. When a political disputant in this country dares not face an issue on its general merits, he invents consti-

* J. Q. Adams's Diary.

tutional objections. Could any constitutional weapon be weaker than that forged for the Missouri discussions, which denied to the general government the right to regulate the social institutions of a territory purchased from its own treasury and disposable at its pleasure? Claiming, in effect, that so far from moulding the young community into a free and happy republic, Congress must of necessity permit free range to early settlers, whether to pollute the soil with polygamy, a hierarchy, an oligarchy, or any other system obnoxious to the Union and destructive of free institutions, under a pretence that men should freely exercise the right of self-government; and in the end either admit the new State unconditionally to membership, or in dumb meekness endure its defiance. That self-same doctrine, while serving its purpose for pushing in Missouri as a pro-slavery State, the disputants themselves disavowed in the compromise section which they attached as a rider to the bill. For the constitutional right was one thing, and the expediency of coercing what had become a populous territory of slaveholders, with the tacit acquiescence, or rather through the inadvertence, of former administrations engrossed with a burdensome war, quite another. Then, again, what fallacy could be more absurd than that worn threadbare in these debates, that the evil of slavery could, after all, be lessened by spreading the slave population? a fallacy so deceptive that in this crisis dispassionate southerners outside of Congress, from Madison to Robert G. Harper, seemed actually to hail Missouri's cause as that of humanity to the negro. The truth was that slavery had already trained the southern masters into a proud and imperious race, firmly compacted and fearless. They would not yield to northern dictation, northern majorities, what they considered brute numbers, in issues like the present.* Virginia, fallen from her high estate, was now as earnest to plant slavery on the western bank of the Mississippi as she had been in her golden days to exclude it from the eastern;

* See Monroe MSS.; 17 Niles's Reg., 434.

nor could the sage Jefferson, prophet though he was,—yes, and, after his temporizing fashion, abolitionist still at heart, —stifle this passionate sympathy with his own State and section upon an issue forced like the present. If Jefferson refused his countenance to the northern anti-slavery movement on this last and crowning opportunity, what southern co-operation on humane grounds could henceforth be looked for?

But the southern leaders of this day were chivalrous, honorable, lovers of the Union, and, upon a drawn contest of strength, prudent calculators of what it was safe to yield for the sake of harmony. The terms of compromise they preferred themselves to offer; and the bargain once made, they meant to stand by it, persuaded that they made a sacrifice, but, like all shrewd negotiators, making that sacrifice as light as possible, and as slave-holders professing no moral compunction over the subject-matter. The Missouri compromise, as we have seen, had a northern basis of origin; but, as actually proposed, it came from those friendly to the admission of Missouri as a pro-slavery State, with Thomas of Illinois, then the least populous State in the Union, for its mouth-piece. Whether Thomas acted independently or was thus put forward by greater compeers in the Senate, in order that the direct proposal should come from a northern and free State representative, the votes for this famous 36° 30′ proviso indicate that the southerners concerted to support it as their ultimatum. Lowndes, of the House, as tradition asserts, had much influence in the final arrangement; a statesman, soon to be cut down in early prime, whose urbane and genial manners, easy fortune, and somewhat sluggish ambition,* served to cement a popularity among his associates in Congress, which rested upon a solid basis of talent, judgment, experience, and strict integrity, so that when less than forty he was reputed the wisest man in Congress.† With Calhoun

* Lowndes had recently declined the appointment either to Russia or Constantinople. 4 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1820.

† To Lowndes is ascribed the authorship of that famous political

and Lowndes for representative men, South Carolina seemed in truth to have changed places with the Old Dominion for the time being, laying aside the hectoring, remorseless spirit, habitual with her, and assuming the *rôle* of philosopher and pacificator in a sectional strife.

Viewed from the stand-point of a stern morality, the Missouri compromise must be pronounced a surrender to the slave power, the cowardly abandonment of a cause and occasion for which northern men might as well have drawn the sword then as did their posterity forty years later. But this point of view is not just to the honor and statesmanship of the times. The political evil was inherent in the constitution itself, which brought States slaveholding and non-slaveholding into indissoluble bonds, providing no radical means for assimilating their condition. The anti-slavery spirit of 1776 had died out, or rather had exhausted its power of persuading States to emancipate; a border line separated already the free and slave sections; and to extend that line beyond the Mississippi and perhaps ultimately to the Pacific had at length become a political necessity, with civil war for the most probable alternative. Latitude 36° 30′ was not the established parallel throughout, though had Virgina followed the impulse of her better days it might have been, and it fairly marked the division of the Union at the cotton belt. In procuring the establishment of that parallel, freedom gained the first real territorial victory it had won since the adoption of the constitution; for the renown of the Ordinance of 1787 belongs justly to the old Continental Congress. This was a victory worth all the agitation it cost, and securing a new northwest territory to freedom. Whether a greater area might not have been rescued from bondage without hazarding fratricide and disunion we cannot assume to judge; perhaps the north would well have pressed opposition to the Missouri bill, long enough to see whether the south would not yield

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phrase of which Jackson made a later use, that "the Presidency of the United States is neither to be sought nor declined."

the whole remnant of the territory, Arkansas included; but it is certain that the Trimble amendment, which offered to test this point, was voted down in the Senate. Nor, in justice to the southern compromisers, should the ambiguous "forever," over which Monroe's cabinet differed so greatly, be taken for trickery. Not a State of this Union which once emancipated ever restored slavery afterwards or made serious attempt to do so; not one of the new States carved out of western territory once pledged to freedom ever deliberately as a State broke the fundamental terms upon which its admission was granted.* The real mischiefs which the Missouri compromise engendered were these: the strife for political power between slavery and freedom which it sanctioned and perpetuated upon the broad national domain; the insatiate appetite for foreign acquisitions south of that line, whether by war or purchase, which it whetted; and finally, by suffering an immense State like Missouri, whose population near the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers was sure to increase rapidly, to be set above the geographical latitude, the license it gave to the wolves of slavery to ravage among the scattered free soil settlers over its borders. Nevertheless this sectional compact was faithfully sustained for more than thirty years; it was broken at length not by those who had bound themselves to keep it, but by degenerate sons of freedom, by disciples also of the malignant John Randolph school who constantly stirred the south to believe that slavery should accept no territorial restraints at all. That perfidious rupture, as our later history will show, brought the north once more to its feet, as no other aggression of its rights could have done, and re-established party

* Some had misgivings at this time about Indiana which proved ill-founded. Perhaps this distinction as to "forever," which for the first time might seem to imply that States once erected out of the north-west territory were vested with a sovereignty adequate for adopting after admission a pro-slavery constitution, was asserted by Crawford and his school not without a hope that Indiana would make an actual experiment in this direction. See J. Q. Adams's Diary, March, 1820.

opposition on the geographical line; the south once more opposing its solid phalanx, for the preservation of its common interests, until crushed in the unequal contest thus provoked. Slavery and slaveholders went down in the dust together, and the American constitution became, what it never had been before, a charter of universal freedom.

So absorbing had been this Missouri controversy, so exhausting, that little else could be done, at the present session, in the way of general legislation such as required a deliberate concurrence of the two Houses. To meet a common complaint that State insolvent laws preferred unfairly the domestic creditor, the Senate passed a general bankruptcy act; but this the House laid aside. On the other hand, Clay spurred the House to do something for the protection of home industry, a subject now pressed upon Congress by numerous petitions, emanating especially from the three chief middle States and Ohio, where the leading manufacturers had organized to create a public sentiment in favor of a higher tariff. Baldwin of Pennsylvania, whose interest in this question made him quite too facile where human rights were at issue, introduced from the committee of commerce and manufactures a bill for relieving, as he termed it, the prostrate industry of the country. Its chief features were these: to abolish the credit allowed on duties, which operated as a premium on importations; to levy an auction duty, so as to discourage the large sales made on account of foreign manufacturers; and finally to increase the import duties, particularly those on cottons and woolens. The test vote on this bill was ominous; for it showed something like a sectional division of the House, as upon the Missouri question, not, however, by so exact a line between slave and free States. All the States south of the Potomac and of Kentucky voted by their representatives against the measure; while New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Ohio were nearly unanimous in its favor. The wavering support embraced New England, where the commercial, free trading

April–May.

spirit still lingered, and the southern border States. With Clay's zealous co-operation in this last quarter, Baldwin carried his bill through the House; but the Senate in turn postponed, though by a bare majority.*

This whole tariff question, in fine, was reserved for a later Congress and a new apportionment of the House. But the contest was gathering. In New York, Philadelphia, and other large centres, societies, already organized for promoting domestic manufactures, held conventions, and issued their addresses to the people, while chambers of commerce on the other hand stirred up the merchants and farmers in opposition. Mathew Carey, whose writings on political economy favored the new system of protection, received a service of plate from his admirers. The national feeling against England and English restrictions was turned to account in this controversy, for "Suwarrow boots," the "Nelson cords," vesting stamped with a British naval flag and the like mummeries, had been too much in fashion. An Englishman who walked down Broadway in these days saw the same kind of wares exposed as in the Strand, and bearing the same names; and finding that our dandy tailors would look at no dress goods but those of foreign mark, American mills worked their superior cloths into the market, not by keeping the price down, but by employing a British agent to sell them as smuggled goods from abroad.†

Out of 137 acts and 5 resolves, passed during this single session, few could have excited interest or invited a serious discussion. A loan of $3,000,000 was authorized to meet the deficiency of revenue which the Treasury report reluctantly confessed.‡ The clamor, in a season of public distress, being loud for retrenchment, Congress cut down the revolutionary pension list; narrowing the benefits of the original act,

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* Annals of Congress, April–May, 1820. The tariff bill passed the House 91 to 78; it was postponed in the Senate by 22 to 21, Otis of Massachusetts going with the south, while the Senators from Delaware and Kentucky voted for it.

† See 18 and 20 Niles's Register; newspapers of the day.

‡ Act May 15, 1820; Statutes at Large.

whose liberality had been abused in many quarters, by imposing a new oath of indigence. Of the 16,000 names already on the pension list, Calhoun was by these means enabled to strike off about half.*

Another act of the same session, known as Crawford's act, (for Crawford procured it in the hope of increasing his patronage,) limited to four years the term of district attorneys, collectors, and various other inferior officers, who had hitherto served by the general tenure of good behavior and acceptable service. This statute later experience regards as the first stepping-stone to our modern vicious system which rotates followers at the crib, and teaches the incumbent that his first duty is to himself wherever reappointment is unlikely. But Monroe still renewed the appointment of all officers against whom no charges were brought.†

While the fate of the Missouri bill lingered in suspense, the Spanish question, so cautiously handled in the annual message, slumbered in the ante-room. But soon after the compromise was adjusted the House committee on foreign relations made a report. Their proposal was to authorize and require the Executive to take possession of Florida, instead of conferring a discretionary power as the President desired. But Monroe still controlled a situation, to which, after all, the key was forbearance, as friendly dispatches from Russia, France, and Great Britain all indicated. The Spanish agent promised by Ferdinand was known, moreover, to be now on his way hither. The House deferred action, therefore, at the request of the Executive ; and early in April arrived the new minister, General Vivés, a man of frank and soldierly bearing, who at once opened his business with the State Department. But the mission of Vivés was a

March 9.

March 27.

April.

* Act May 1, 1820 ; 17 and 18 Niles's Register.

† See Act May 15, 1820. This new law impressed Ex-President Madison so unfavorably that he wrote to Monroe, inquiring whether to vacate these offices periodically was not an encroachment on the constitutional attributes of the Executive. See Monroe MSS., December, 1820. What reply, if any, Monroe made, does not appear.

shuffling one ; he brought no authority to execute the treaty, deliver up the Floridas, or bind the king to anything beyond a very vague assurance that, if satisfactory assurances were given, the treaty would be ratified. True enough, Ferdinand's fear was that the moment he ratified, we would recognize the Spanish republics ; and hence to extort new pledges from the United States, or at all events gain time for his own colonial policy, was his object. But while Vivés waited, came the news that revolution had broken out in Spain to re-establish the old constitution and check the reactionary violence of a king who in exile had learned nothing but to confound popular liberty with the Bonapartes. Still fair and moderate, Monroe submitted the new facts to Congress ; and while professing himself ready to take possession of Florida for our indemnity unless Spain would yield, he advised postponing action for the present session. Not unwillingly the House consented, and a few days later Congress adjourned by agreement to the 13th of November.* Vivés was now asked to procure from his government a final decision, which he promised to do, having already dispatched a messenger to Spain.

May 9, 10.

May 15.

A notable change of feeling towards the suspended treaty had followed upon the late sectional collisions. South and North were at cross purposes. The southern appetite for new soil, to devote to slavery and the strengthening of the slave interest, had been whetted by a geographical division, which left to that section a mere remnant out of what, by a stroke of the pen, as it seemed, might have been a magnificent area. Our title to Texas as legally a part of the Louisiana cession had really little strength ; but the hint of a legal claim under that cession was enough to make men deplore what they termed the gift to Spain of a domain worthy fifty times as much as the Floridas, for the sake of procuring the formal surrender of the latter. To this complaint the legislature of Louisiana presently gave expression. The argument seemed to be that we could keep the Flor-

* Annals of Congress; Niles's Register.

idas as ours already by conquest and bring Spain to treat the region west of the Sabine instead of the real subject matter for purchase,—a preposterous supposition in the present temper of Europe, to say the least; and now slaveholders pressed the Executive to improve the present delay so as to shift the stated boundary from the Sabine to the Rio del Norte. On the other hand, such was the dissatisfaction at the north that many who had hailed at first the promised annexation of Florida, saw now in the prospective addition of another slave State nothing palatable but the likelihood that its sandy barrens and dreary swamps would keep it an insignificant one, and as for fertile Texas, they stood ready to refuse it as a gift unless coupled with some anti-slavery proviso. Adams himself foresaw clearly that in this rapid acquisition of new territory for which freedom and slavery must needs contend lay the greatest of dangers to the existence of the American Union. Though an eastern man himself, and of strong anti-slavery convictions, he had taken no part in the late political movement which swept the north like a tempest; indeed, before that tempest began and while the treaty was pending no member of the administration had been so unwilling as he to accept the Sabine as the western boundary. Now he was glad the treaty stood as it did.* The determined concession to northern sentiment, the responsibility for thus limiting the American demands, the forecast, too, that out of the Tallmadge amendment would spring up a violent agitation ending, perhaps, in some territorial truce, all were in fact the President's. And such was the purport of Monroe's present explanation to personal friends, when reproached for not having insisted that Texas should be embraced within the present boundaries of Louisiana. From the nature of the controversy, so he expressed himself, it seemed hazardous for either party to gain a complete triumph; the east was jealous of aggrandizement at the west and south; and he held decidedly to the opinion that, considering our present vast control of the Mississippi wa-

* See *supra*, p. 97.

ters, we ought to be content with Florida for the present, or until, at all events, public opinion in the northern Atlantic states should become reconciled to a further change of boundaries.* Three Presidents, and only three, are conspicuous thus far in our annals for patient considerateness to all sides: Washington, Monroe and Lincoln. This rare executive trait had in Washington the quality of inflexible justice, in Lincoln of humane tenderness, but in Monroe the subtle and delicate flavor of generous honor.

George III. was now dead. His tempestuous reign of sixty years had brought great changes; of the half million inhabitants in the Union who were once his subjects, some still living had prayed to him as a sovereign, denounced him as an oppressor, fought him as a foe, and treated with him as citizens of a free and independent country. Posterity might look more gently than their ancestors upon the failings of a monarch conscientious and upright; whose stubborn perversity, which to our cause was worth all, since it drove us to extremities, might be traceable to mental disorder, to the malady which four times overcame him in his long career before he sank to pass his last ten years in hopeless lunacy. A new king was proclaimed in London as the great bell of St. Paul's ceased to toll. George IV., on his accession, reappointed the members of the late cabinet, pursuing the policy of the regency.

Though the great battle over the admission of Missouri, had been fought, a third and final struggle was now impending. The whole country had accepted the legislative compromise in the spirit of loyalty and conciliation; but such a settlement could not satisfy earnest souls to whom uncompromising right was better than the Union itself; still less those restless leaders who at the first drum-beat of a humane crusade had seen a new army assemble which they burned to lead forward. The events of the recess extinguished the faint hope some had cherished that the new

* Monroe MSS., letters to Jefferson and Jackson, May, 1820; and see *supra*, p. 98.

State would in some way be shamed into freedom. The stream of population which had flowed steadily into Missouri since agitation commenced was of southern source. "Born in freedom's eagle nest," as they claimed to be, these frontier inhabitants carried themselves in the present crisis with an air of ruffian bluster which confirmed the rumor current at the east, that Missourians wore dirks and stabbed one another in a quarrel. They for their part retorted that King's new party meant to proclaim freedom and excite the slaves to cut the throats and burn the houses of their masters.* The Missouri convention met in June to frame a State constitution. That constitution contained, among other clauses, two very offensive in the present inflamed state of the northern mind. One sanctioned slavery to the extent of forbidding the legislature to interfere with it ; a prohibition hitherto unusual in State constitutions. The other required the legislature to frame laws so as to prevent free colored persons from settling in the State. Of these clauses, the former, barring deliberately out, as it did, the light of freedom, must really have been the more obnoxious ; but to the latter, which embodied in the fundamental law an idea expressed by local statutes elsewhere, already in dispute, a constitutional objection might be raised ; and this clause, accordingly, was made the rock of opposition by those who wished to break the truce with slavery and renew the fight. Free persons of color had in some States the political character of citizens ; and unlikely as such citizens doubtless were to emigrate to a slave State, to prohibit their immigration was a breach of that clause of the federal constitution which secures to citizens of each State the privileges of citizenship in every State. Whatever older States already admitted might have done, Congress, certainly, was not called upon to approve a new State constitution repugnant to the fundamental law of the land. The American instinct scents the unconstitutional in all questions of political ethics ; so, too, does jus-

June.

* Newspapers of the day.

tice under the inspiration of our common law cut its way gladly through briers of technicalities; nevertheless, the underlying objection with conscience men was, in this instance, the defiant purpose of the Missouri convention to make slavery within the new State perpetual if possible.*

When Congress convened at the close of the recess, a new canvass in the House showed at once that the agitation of the former session would be renewed. Nov. 13. Clay, who was absent and occupied with professional engagements, forwarded his resignation of the speakership. The clerk called the House to order; candidates north and south were presented for the vacant chair; and after a heated contest, lasting into the third day of the session, Taylor, the anti-slavery champion, was chosen over Lowndes, the compromiser, on the twenty-second ballot by a majority of two votes.†

Maine had already escaped the toils ; and Holmes, who had piloted the admission bill so earnestly at the former session, took his seat in the Senate, with John Chandler for a colleague. This change of situation gave to the adversaries of Missouri's admission an advantage they had not possessed before ; for Maine, we should observe, came into the Union by the peculiar process of dismemberment from Massachusetts, and under a single declaratory act, which recognized simultaneously the consent of the dismembered State and the convention held in pursuance thereof; while Missouri's admission followed the usual rule of new States erected in the national domain, of which Illinois and Alabama furnished late examples; that is to say, an act of Congress enabled a territorial convention to meet and form a constitution and State government upon prescribed terms, after which a joint resolution, expressing

* Benton's View, 8, favors this view of the controversy. He claims that he instigated this prohibition, though not a member of the Missouri convention, being equally opposed to slavery agitation and to slavery extension.

† Annals of Congress ; Niles's Register.

the national approval of the work of that convention, declared the new State admitted. The Missouri compromise had been embraced in the first or enabling act as to that State ; and it now remained to pass the joint resolution, without which there was no admission *de facto* into the Union. Against the passage of that joint resolution the agitators in Congress made their final stand.

This last Missouri debate it is quite needless to set out at length. The constitution of the new State was in the House referred to a select committee, with Lowndes at the head, which reported in favor of admission. This report the House rejected by 93 to 73, deciding in effect that Missouri should not be admitted as at present constituted. In the Senate, on the previous day, the Senate had accepted a report, and resolved in favor of admission, with a provision attached by way of rider, on Eaton's motion, disclaiming assent to any clause which contravened the constitutional rights of citizens of each State. This resolution the House laid aside for some six weeks, and finally referred it to the committee of the whole, together with one presented by Eustis, of Massachusetts, who had lately taken his seat, which provided that Missouri should be admitted after first expunging the obnoxious clause. The Eustis resolution, in whose preparation the Secretary of State appears to have had a hand,* was defeated by a large majority ; and upon the motion of Clay, who had by this time taken his seat on the floor, the Senate resolution with the Eaton proviso came up for discussion, the House galleries filling in expectation of a great debate, and the excitement increasing daily.

Nov.-Dec.

Dec. 13.

Dec. 12.

1821. Jan. 15.

Jan. 29.

The House was nearly evenly divided on the main issue. On one side were those from south and north who favored the admission of Missouri with some proviso against the repugnant clause ; whether because no easier terms could be obtained, and it was, after all, yielding the

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary, November, 1820.

shadow for the substance, or from a sincere intent to keep faith and at the same time fulfil the wishes of constituents. Opposed to this combination were on the one hand the bolder anti-slavery men, led by Sergeant, a man of Quaker-like manners but great decision of character, who would have kept Missouri out, and on the other Randolph's southern radicals, who demanded, as in the former debates, that Missouri should come in without compromise or condition whatsoever. In this delicate poise of interests, Clay, who as a southerner commanded the confidence of his own section, led the way, though not easily, to a new adjustment. Professing himself at once in favor of the Eaton proviso, or one more imperative if need be, he drew forth amended expressions from various compromisers of the last session, who now voted with the north, and whose good will was essential. Lowndes being taken sick, the lead fell naturally to Clay, and the problem for one of his skill and address to ascertain was how much concession would detach from the majority enough anti-slavery votes to win.

Scarcely a month remained for carrying out a work which, if unfinished, left the peace of the Union in great jeopardy,—Sergeant having already attempted, though in vain, to postpone the whole matter to another Congress,—when Clay, by way of settling this distracting question, impressively moved a reference of the Senate resolution to a committee of thirteen. This was assented to, and among the seven northern and six southern members appointed were Eustis, Smith, Sergeant, and Lowndes, with Clay as chairman. Clay's report, presented about a week later, showed that the committee were nearly unanimous in the opinion that the compromise of the former session ought not to be disturbed, and that the only present issue related to such provisions in the proposed constitution of Missouri as were incompatible with that compromise; or in other words to the clause which concerned the rights of free colored persons. The majority proposed, therefore, that Missouri be admitted upon the fundamental condition that this clause

Feb. 2.

Feb. 10–13.

should not be construed and no law should ever pass in derogation of the rights of citizens of another State coming to that State; not meaning, however, to prevent Missouri when admitted from exercising the rights aud powers inherent in the original States. To this fundamental condition the Missouri legislature having solemnly assented, the President's proclamation should make the admission of that State complete. Clay threw himself upon the frankness and courtesy of his fellow-members with this programme; but his report, together with the Senate resolution, was rejected by a small majority at first, and then on reconsideration by a larger one; * Randolph's little band voting with stalwart northerners against it.

Feb. 13.

This repulse settled at all events that the announcement of the electoral votes for the President and Vice-President, which was in order for the following day, must proceed with Missouri left out. Fortunately the result was clear enough, whether Missouri's vote were counted or not; and on the advice of a joint committee it was hastily decided that a hypothetical announcement as to that State should follow the electoral count. The Senators marched over to the House wing at the appointed hour. The process of counting and verifying the votes was tedious, lasting till late in the afternoon. When the Missouri certificate was opened and handed to the tellers, Livermore promptly objected to counting that vote because Missouri was not a State of this Union. Randolph and Floyd of Virginia started to their feet; and the Senate retiring to its own chamber, an angry discussion ensued upon Floyd's resolution that Missouri was a State and entitled to vote. Clay got the resolution laid on the table; the Senate was recalled; and the count proceeded to its close, not without intemperate interruptions from both Floyd and Randolph, who were declared out of order and required to take their seats. As agreed upon, the President of the Senate an-

Feb. 14.

*Annals of Congress. The final vote stood on reconsideration 88 to 82.

nounced the total vote both ways, including Missouri and leaving her out, and declaring that by either count the candidate named had a majority. Hereupon the Senate retired, leaving Randolph on the floor struggling to be heard. No sooner had the House reorganized than Randolph offered a resolution declaring these proceedings irregular and illegal; but a disgraceful scene was prevented by an immediate adjournment.*

The next day Roberts of Pennsylvania, who had voted against admission, offered a resolution for admitting Missouri on condition that the objectionable article in her constitution should be modified. Though this was rejected, the drift of debate indicated that if the House would initiate some such measure the Senate was prepared to meet it half way. Seizing his opportunity, for there was little time remaining, Clay on the following day moved, as a last resort, for the appointment of a joint committee of Congress. This motion, already expected, prevailed in the House by 101 to 55; bringing together all the southerners except Randolph's implacable few, and all northern men who sincerely meant not to break up the former compromise upon any mere pretext. By this time it was becoming apparent that the anti-slavery ground was not well chosen; or rather that it had been cut clean away by the concessions already offered; for if Congress were precluded from making Missouri over into a free State, it was hardly worth while to risk disorders, perhaps a civil war, upon the phrases of its local constitution which southerners were disposed to soften. In truth the second Missouri struggle had settled all that was essential; and as this conviction spread, northern democrats in Congress marked a turn of public sentiment at home which permitted them to escape the new sectional alliance and rejoin their southern colleagues. Twenty-three, a number equal to that of the

Feb. 15-21.

* Annals of Congress; 19 Niles's Register; J Q. Adams's Diary; 6 Hildreth. The next day the House refused to consider Randolph's resolution.

States themselves, were chosen by ballot, on the part of the House, to serve on the joint committee; to these the Senate, acceding to the plan by the decisive vote of 29 to 7, joined Holmes, James Barbour, Roberts, Morril of New Hampshire, Samuel L. Southard of New Jersey (whose national career was just commencing), Johnson of Kentucky, and King, seven in all. Clay led the House list,* and in persuasive power the entire committee; and it was something of a personal triumph on his part that the resolution, as reported to the two Houses, unanimously on the part of the Senate members, and nearly so as concerned the House, proved substantially that of the former House committee, except for the part flattering to State power, which was now omitted. This resolution passed Feb. 26–28. the House 86 to 82; the Senate concurred by two to one, the vote standing 28 to 14; conditional admission accordingly was the essence of the compromise. King unflinchingly opposed the arrangement, as did other northern men in both branches of the legislature; while of the southerners none voted against it but Macon in the Senate, and two or three in the House who, like Randolph, insisted to the last upon absolute admission or nothing.

Had this second compromise involved essential rights, the proper course would have been to require, as a condition precedent of admission, a change in the fundamental law, somewhat as Eustis had proposed. But Clay steered clear of this ultimatum, finding that a lesser sacrifice would serve. The joint resolution, as finally passed and approved, admitted Missouri upon the express condition that the clause in her constitution which excluded free people of color should never be construed to authorize the passage of any law abridging the rights of a citizen. The assent of Missouri to this condition was to be expressed not in conven-

* Cobb, Philip P. Barbour, and Storrs were upon this committee, Randolph and Baldwin being also selected, the choice not being confined to one from each State. Seventeen only were elected, and the chair, by consent, supplied the six others, filling a vacancy or two besides. 20 Niles's Register.

tion or by way of constitutional amendment, but, as the act read, by the State legislature for the time being.* Yielding this assent in the course of the summer, the Missouri legislature kept the State pride well bolstered by announcing at the same time that the whole requirement was an empty formality, since this body had no power to bind the State, and only complied with the act of Congress in token of a wish to promote peace and harmony. Despite the cool disclaimer, Monroe's proclamation in August announced compliance as a fact and the complete admission of Missouri;† and here the struggle ended.

With this last maternal shake of a saucy daughter who had never been brought up to respect the rights of black men, and must needs, when full grown, go her own way (for this second Missouri compromise, with its sham solicitude for colored citizens, deserves no comparison more dignified), our second anti-slavery movement terminates, enough having been accomplished, as in 1807, to remove the main basis of agitation.‡ After a short campaign of some two years, therefore, the array north and south of the line disbanded, and King's geographical party fell to pieces. Something, as before, had been gained; something to maintain the strength though not the supremacy of freedom in the Union. Some States had emancipated, others had almost emancipated under the earlier and milder agitation; and to crown the work the African slave-trade had been abolished, —effectually abolished, thanks to the international spirit which braced the civilized world to its task. This second and fiercer collision in the American Union upon internal issues allied slavery and freedom in the belief that they were henceforth to live and grow loyally and peaceably together notwithstanding the new conditions of national expansion

* See Joint Resolution, March 2, 1821.

† 20 Niles's Register, 388. This Proclamation dates Missouri's admission as August 10, 1821. As early as December, 1820, Monroe stated that Congress would probably decide to admit Missouri with a proviso. Monroe MSS., December, 1820.

‡ See vol. ii, p. 129.

which increased the difficulties of the problem. Hence the renewed impulse, traceable forty years longer in the bosom of both sections, that slavery agitation, with all its disagreeable incidents, should be steadily avoided. To deplore, to forget, to lull the painful question to sleep whenever it cried out, was the duty of good citizens; and as good citizens many of our best and purest made this the rule of their lives. For how could this glorious Union which rested upon pillars of concession survive its lost nepenthe? The seat of agitation in these two early epochs had been the middle Atlantic section, by a centre which shifted from Philadelphia to New York; that of the last and most violent anti-slavery movement in the third great epoch, yet to be considered, was New England, or rather Boston; and the final agitation which commenced in aggressive abolition, though various other influences shaped its history, dates properly in the national sense from Jackson's administration and the decade of 1830–40. To that later period, which was preceded by a peaceful slumber and fraternal dreams, our narrative of the slave struggle is deferred.

The strife just composed, we may, however, add, brought to many thoughtful minds the necessity of some broader plan of emancipation than had yet been devised, and that too under the national sanction, since no State was competent to direct it. Nothing came of the suggestion. Men whose investments were placed elsewhere exhorted slaveholders to take up the experiment and impoverish themselves. Aside from the sinfulness of the existing system, arguments were not wanting to convince the southerner that on economical grounds he would be better off with free labor. In the first place, the total cost, involved in the employment of a slave, allowing for his orginal purchase money, or the detriment of breeding and rearing him, and deducting from the worth of his able-bodied service through life the expense of constant maintenance in sickness, health, and old age, together with the chances of premature death or incapacity, was estimated as greater than that of hiring a freeman for the same length of service. Next, the laborer who worked as a mere machine

for the bare necessaries of life, and without the hope of bettering his condition or laying up for himself, would prove indolent, stubborn, and shiftless, working as little as possible, and enhancing the cost to his owner. And certain it was that under a system which pampered the master in scornful idleness, as though labor and personal supervision on his part were demeaning, and encouraged ostentatious hospitality to the point of waste and profusion, for the sake of appearing a gentleman, one was liable to special loss both from these easy children of nature, who maimed his horses, wasted his victuals, and built great fires in warm weather for cheerfulness, and from the careless or knavish overseer who lashed their brown backs to keep them at work. Nevertheless an institution symbolical of wealth and rooted in the pride if not the affection of a social community, is not thus easily shaken. What northern scion, with inherited wealth, will surrender it to the State or destroy it on proof that his ancestors acquired it unjustly? Indeed, the true solution of the problem, and, as events showed, the only peaceful one, lay in national emancipation on a basis of national indemnity ; conscience addressing self-interest before the cancer went deeper. To some such public deliverance, which did not of necessity involve the final removal of the negro race which they advised, Jefferson and Madison feebly pointed ; but the cost of the experiment was great, and of leaders rising to influence not one tried to arouse this drowsy nation to the task. O ! that some muse of fire had at this moment lifted the curtain and shown in the near future the dread alternative of a forcible emancipation, infinitely more costly. But to soothe, to palliate, to mingle the wine and the poison of the constitution in fuller measure, this was the standard of statesmanship for years to come. Like the prince of the Arabian tale, half human and half marble, the American people were under the spell of an enchantment which the congested arteries refused to expel ; and covering the unwholesome body with rich robes of purple, they ruled, strong still in youth, though death were dragging at the vitals.

Two days before the count of the electoral vote came the long-suspended Florida treaty, whose ratification in October by the Spanish Cortes had been the Washington rumor all winter. Nearly four months on the way from Madrid, the document on its arrival was delivered by Vivés to our Executive, who submitted it anew to the Senate, where it was ratified with only four dissenting votes. On the anniversary of Washington's birth, the same day on which Clay proposed the joint committee which settled the Missouri question, the President announced a full re-acceptance of the treaty with Spain two years from its original date, and asked legislation for carrying it into effect.*

Feb. 12-19.

Feb. 22.

This triumph of patience and moderation bore down all factious opposition. The Texas annexationists were silent. Clay, who the session before had carried his point in favor of a minister to the South American republics, now found the House indisposed to carry out the plan. All he could yet procure was the expression of a deep interest in the success of the revolutionary struggle and an assurance of support to the President whenever he should see fit to recognize their independence; to all of which Monroe, being treated as he deserved, returned an answer pleasing but ambiguous.† As usual, where the momentous question of recognition must be passed upon, the Executive, responsible for the decision, could not pose for popularity. Monroe's sympathy with the revolutionists was positive, but prudential reasons compelled thus far a neutral attitude. Our South American agents had advised caution; foreign powers were watching silently, and Ferdinand's delay with the Spanish treaty had baffled all progress.‡

Feb. 2-6.

Feb. 10.

* See Niles's Register; J. Q. Adams's Diary. And see Act March 2, 1821, for carrying this treaty into execution.

† Niles's Register; Annals of Congress.

‡ As Monroe stated in his confidential letters, the policy of his administration had been to throw the moral weight of the United States into the

Through the collapsing shell of fictitious credit and values a safer foundation for business was gradually reached. But great distress still prevailed; and this, with the low state of our revenue, brought government to a strait where economy and retrenchment were absolutely imperative. Notwithstanding the loan of three millions, the Treasury had gone through its past year with arrears; and to meet current demands for 1821 a new loan of five millions was requisite; and all this in a time of profound peace. Oppressed by the spirit of economy which pervaded our community, Congress swept the whole range of national expenditure with the broom of scrutiny, making close reductions in every direction; for retrenchment was now more popular than taxation. The War Department bore the brunt of an attack from the Crawford faction, in which a personal jealousy of Calhoun was mingled. The project of coast defence, comprehending a long line of fortifications from New Orleans to Mount Desert, was interrupted. An exploring expedition up the Yellowstone was stopped. The regular army was cut down from 10,000 to less than 6,000 men, and so as to leave only one major-general and two brigadiers on the new register. As for the navy, still the more popular branch, the annual appropriation pledged in 1816 for its increase was reduced from $1,000,000 to $500,000. Other department estimates were struck at, even to the abolition of an $800 clerkship in the Attorney-General's office. By such vigorous retrenchment an annual expenditure of $21,000,000 for the service of the government, more than half of which went to permanent or incidental objects, such as interest and instalments of the public debt, pensions, fortifications, and increase of the navy, was lessened at once more than $2,000,000, and reduced still further in the two next suc-

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scale of the colonies without so deeply compromising the nation as to make it a party to the war. Our ports were opened to them; our good offices had been exercised for them, and to good purpose, with every power in Europe; and by the policy thus pursued more real service had been done them than recognition with its accompanying dangers could possibly have procured. Monroe MSS.; J. Q. Adams's Diary.

ceeding years. In times like these the earlier tables are sure to be brought out for comparison; and old republicans sighed when they saw that Jefferson had governed the nation well on $3,000,000 a year, or at one-third the present cost of actual administration, which in turn, compared with that of a still later age, seems trivial enough.*

For the relief of Western settlers in arrears, memorials arrived from all the new States. Hitherto the public land had been sold by instalments at a minimum price of $2 an acre, one payment down and the remainder spread over four years, with a forfeiture of all previous payments should the purchaser prove at any time delinquent. During a period of inflation there had been wild speculations in these lands, especially in Alabama and Mississippi, local banks granting their facilities, and the purchaser heeding only his ability to make his first payment. Depression came, then distress; the banks failed; the purchaser could not meet his annual instalment; and government stood in the relation of creditor, and by right a harsh one, to its own citizens. Twenty-three millions of dollars or more were thus due, upon which extensions had already been obtained. By an act of 1820† a salutary change was made from the credit to the cash system; and the minimum price was reduced to $1.25 an acre, the public land being made purchasable henceforth in tracts as small as half-quarter sections of eighty acres. For the relief of present debtors, a further act of the second session permitted credit purchasers to consolidate payments, already made on different tracts, upon any particular one by relinquishing the rest.‡ This substitution of the cash for the credit system in public land sales, with its accompanying reduction in cost, was an important step in the new direction of encouraging backwoods settlers to buy, not of large speculators but directly of the government. That the indirect resource accruing from the honest cultivation and improve-

* See Stats. at Large, acts March 2 and 3, 1821; Benton's Thirty Years; J. Q. Adams's Diary; Niles's Register.

† Act April 24,1820.

‡ Act March 2, 1821.

ment of the public tracts is of more consequence to the government than any immediate revenue to be derived from their sale as wild land by the acre was an idea not yet developed. Upon that idea are based our later pre-emption and homestead acts, which give the land away, or nearly so, to the squatter who will improve it. An annual revenue from sales of the public land, seldom more than $1,500,000, had in 1819, while money seemed plenty, risen to $3,000,000 and upwards. Some argued at this time that such a fund might be devoted to the deportation of the negro; others that it should be expended upon roads and canals; and lately the Maryland legislature had proposed that the original thirteen States should claim this revenue, or a good part of it, for the purposes of education, and not leave all such gifts to be bestowed upon the new States.*

Though money was accumulating in the vaults of the sounder banks or hoarded by the prudent creditor, though circulation was sluggish, confidence still prostrate, and safe investments paying a smaller percentage than had been known for ten years, the great Missouri debates of this Congress crowded all business legislation aside. Out of 54 acts at the second session all but a few of trivial consequence were approved on the last two days of the session. The fourth of March came in on Sunday; and the midnight of Saturday saw the President sitting with members of his cabinet in a committee-room at the Capitol, signing bills as fast as they were presented to him. All at last was finished. On Clay's motion the House, with only one negative, passed a vote of thanks to the new Speaker; the last formal announcement was made in both branches; the hammer fell; and at one in the morning the twin flags were hauled in, as the tired legislators passed by the stone steps down the west bank to Pennsylvania avenue, crossed Tiber creek, and dispersed to their several lodgings. March 3.

Let us return by daylight to re-visit Capitol Hill, that

* See 20 Niles's Register

lofty eminence which overlooks the Potomac and the plain on which Washington city is built. Here we shall see two large rectangular buildings, built of porous freestone and painted white for their better protection from the weather (or as some say, so as to conceal the smoke stains left by the British), slowly uniting together under the supervision of the famous Bulfinch by means of a central rotunda not yet finished, to take the place of a wooden covered way temporarily erected. Each building has a small dome ; the rotunda is to have a larger one ; and the northerly building belongs to the Senate, the southerly to the House of Representatives. The Hall of Representatives, already pronounced the finest piece of architecture in America, is semi-circular in shape, and supported upon dark Breccia or pudding-stone columns, surmounted by white marble capitals, which give to the finish the peculiar effect of Mamelukes wearing light turbans. Unfortunately, this chamber has been found ill calculated for sound, the orator's voice being lost in the vast expanse of domes and the irregular surfaces into which the line of wall is broken. To lessen the defect crimson draperies are already hung between the columns and above the Speaker's chair; the latter with canopy of crimson silk, trimmed with fringe, and supported by four upright posts, having the pomp of a throne; but all is of little avail.* The gallery is reached through the lobby in front of this chamber, rows of seats rising one above another; but in the body of the hall is a sort of lobby or gallery for privileged persons, separated from the main portion by the colonnade and marble columns. While the House is in session members sit facing the Speaker, each in his mahogany chair with mahogany table before him;

* Various other expedients were proposed from time to time, while this hall was occupied, to lessen the reverberation, such as moving the Speaker's chair, raising the floor, building an inner partition, suspending a glass ceiling, and stretching a cloth across at the bottom of the dome. Few of these were tried, and nothing gave much satisfaction except, perhaps, filling the space under the floor with solid brick, which Bulfinch pronounced beneficial. See various House documents on this subject.

the floor is covered with a beautiful carpet much stained by the misdirected juice squirted at the brass spittoons. During the day the hall is lighted from above and from windows on the straight side, through which one catches a glimpse of the sunshine and bright landscape; and when, as in the night session just closed, the large chandelier suspended from the centre of the dome is lighted up, and the brackets in the rear and the large candlesticks at the Speaker's desk are supplied, the candles shed a soft and mellow radiance upon the scene.*

It may have been a chance coincidence that just now, while people complained that few of the great speeches delivered in the Representatives' Hall made an impression until they were read in the newspaper columns, the Senate, on entering its corresponding and simpler but better constructed chamber of the north building, should have begun likewise that new and illustrious career which made this pre-eminently the forum of national oratory; for with the second Missouri debate and the opposing passage of King and Pinkney the Senate shook the dew from its mane and became for the first time a power. Forty-eight in all when Missouri was admitted, this was a number not too great for dispatching business nor too small to make an occasion eloquent. Yet there hovered in the atmosphere something of the old contrast between Senate and House. In the popular body, whose seats were arranged for 186 members, was crowding and restlessness; all seemed a parliamentary maze, through which a few tacticians led the business; members read and wrote, and were inattentive to one another; and in a large space behind the Speaker's throne, and under the large statue of liberty, members and privileged persons walked to and fro, talking as they might, except at the moment of taking the question. But here the impression produced was very different; all was complacent courtesy and decorous attention.

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* A picture of the Hall in 1822 during a night session hangs in the Corcoran Art Gallery at Washington.

No leaders will ever again be seen like those one has gazed upon in plastic youth. Contemporaries of Clay, Calhoun, and Webster contrasted the giants of earlier days, as these in turn became men of renown. Doubtless, as republican manners grew and the great western valley enlarged its delegation, the old aroma of stateliness was lost. Constituencies were no longer instructed but flattered; and the wheel of rotation came into view. One Senator complained that his fellow-members of Congress were getting too much into the habit of signing recommendations for office out of compliment, in favor of people with whom they had no personal acquaintance, the paper being handed from one to another, and signed without the sense of individual responsibility.* There was ample reason to believe that half the members of Congress canvassed office for themselves and their relatives when vacancies occurred, and legislation in consequence took the hue of their hopes or disappointments; for, as John Quincy Adams observed, two modes were in vogue, the cringing canvass and the flouting canvass. Business, too, was becoming greatly obstructed in the interminable debate. Bills were still concisely worded, and from the title one might gather the subject-matter; but how many tedious weeks had been taken up with the Seminole and Missouri discussions; legislation waiting, to be rushed hastily through at the end or else laid over altogether. Two or three talented speakers consumed the whole argument; and then one would take the floor and occupy two, four, or six hours with a speech, to which nobody cared to listen, composed as it was from exordium to peroration for his constituents to read. This was talking to "Buncombe." "Log-rolling," or the exchange of votes for one another's measures, was as old as Congress itself; but bribery † could not be imputed where private claims were concerned, and after figuring in the journals for fifteen or twenty years the bill passed which remunerated Amy Darden for her horse.

* Monroe Corr., 1819, letter of Eppes.

† See *e. g.* Hildreth, 639 (1818).

In the north wing an open well, near the Senate chamber, disclosed the floor of the basement below; it was designed originally for a staircase, but is used only for purposes of light and ventilation. Near this well a winding staircase led to a chamber on the same level, before which was a small hall, having an eastern door of entrance from the Capitol ground, and pillars for support whose novel design was that of Indian corn stalks with half-open ears at the top. In this basement chamber sat the most august tribunal of the land hearing solemn argument. Lighted only by windows at the east side, and supported by heavy columns, the whole aspect of this vault was that of a massive solidity almost Egyptian.* Though the British soldiers in 1814 had here piled furniture gathered from other rooms and made a blazing fire, little damage had been done beyond cracking the columns; but the chamber had since been rebuilt and strengthened. Sitting in the midst of his six associates, all wearing their black silk gowns, Marshall, who had presided over this court for twenty years, and had yet fourteen more to serve, was the chief personage; tall, spare, and emaciated in figure, with small head, and a face whose amiable expression did little justice to his known strength of character; but whose keen black eye, which could twinkle merrily enough, pierced with unblinking gaze the countenance uplifted in dull or sophistical address, while it seemed to irradiate and whisper secret encouragement to the advocate who supported well a just cause. Among the juniors were Story, fluent of thought and industrious, and Bushrod Washington, the senior in commission. In this "cave of Trophonius," as Randolph styled it, which visitors entered and left with scarcely an audible whisper, no bailiff calling out "Silence!" argued from their briefs the foppish but well-prepared Pinkney, Wirt, florid in face and expression, the romantic Emmett, the plain Jeremiah Mason, the courtly Binney, the chivalrous Clay, and the omnipotent

* This room now serves as the law library of Congress, the Supreme Court occupying what was formerly the Senate chamber.

Webster. The court had at this time a purpose to which Marshall, with all his modest and simple demeanor, gave a courageous direction, that, namely, of riveting the Union on every opportunity into a national government by enlarging the scope of constitutional powers; for Marshall brought Federalist principles to the bench, and Story learned them there. The judgment was clearly pronounced, and the ground of decision temperately but forcibly stated. There the court rested; and in the spirit of comity, rather than of compulsion, Executive and legislature acquiesced. State courts conformed to the precedent; and though, as in the bank-tax question, partisans might hold out for a space, the people soon submitted, for they respected the tribunal.

With Marshall, who in his own high sphere of office gradually attracted to himself a public veneration such as no other incumbent of the American bench ever yet enjoyed and Presidents might envy, Monroe cherished cordial relations. It was his sympathy with all that was great and high in the common heritage of the Union, his readiness to learn, his genuine goodness of heart, even more than the patience and good judgment which he brought to bear upon the serious perplexities still pending, that carried Monroe's triumphant re-election to the Presidency in 1820. Neither financial distress nor sectional jealousy hurt him. In vain had newspapers prophesied his downfall, while rivals plotted insidiously. He did not descend to counter-plot, but performed his honest duty as he understood it. Such Presidents enjoy the special protection of the people.

1820. April. A congressional caucus, summoned at the Capitol by Samuel Smith, chairman of the caucus of 1816, was a failure; only 40 attended and it was voted inexpedient to nominate. Whatever the elements of discontent they worked out in State and district elections. A so-called anti-slavery list of Presidential electors for the Keystone State received scarcely any support outside Philadelphia. Even in New York, where disaffection was strongest

and the turmoil between Clinton and anti-Clinton factions ran high, the legislature by a fair majority chose electors favorable to the old Presidential ticket. Massachusetts supported the "Washington-Monroe" policy. In fine, Monroe like Washington was re-chosen President by a vote practically unanimous. One, however, of the 232 electoral votes cast was wanting to consummate this exceptional honor; for a New Hampshire elector, with a boldness of discretion which, in our days and especially upon a close canvass, would have condemned him to infamy, threw away upon John Quincy Adams the vote which belonged like those of his colleagues to Monroe, determined, so it is said, that no later mortal should stand in Washington's shoes.* Of America's Presidents elected by virtual acclamation history as yet furnishes but these two examples; and as between the men honored by so unapproachable a tribute of confidence, Monroe entered upon his second term of office with less of real political opposition than Washington, under whom, as the reader will recall, parties, young and vigorous, fought violently, though each deprecated his displeasure.

Placed upon the same ticket with Monroe, Tompkins was chosen a second time to the Vice-Presidency; by a vote less unanimous to be sure, and yet without decided opposition. Gladly would he have waived this honor, could he but return to his old office. Clinton and Tompkins were rivals, in 1820, for Governor of New York, supported by the respective factions; the one strong by reason of recent service and family influence; the other popular in manners and remembered for his war record. But Clinton had cultivated the anti-slavery vote while Tompkins fought shy of the Missouri question.

What weighed most against Tompkins was the unsettled state of his public accounts. For large disbursements made under his direction during the late war, vouchers could not

* See Tables of Electoral Votes, Appendix. And see William Plumer's Life, as to another reason alleged by himself for throwing away his vote as an elector.

be produced, though he had made large advances on his private credit. Against him personally nothing more serious than carelessness was imputed. Clinton carried the day; but such was the popularity of the defeated candidate that the State legislature passed an act to help relieve him of his debts. Another allowance was made still later by Congress, but Tompkins remained hopelessly embarrassed. Finally the canvass of pity, which is always fatal to political preferment, overwhelmed his sensitive pride, and, together with his unsettled accounts, brought him to an early grave. Absent from Washington and his official duties much of the time, and sick in body and mind, he died soon after the expiration of his second term of office at the age of fifty.*

* The picture of Vice-President Tompkins at the Corcoran Art Gallery gives him a good head, a long, full face, beardless, except for short side whiskers, a round chin, chestnut hair, blue eyes, and altogether a ruddy expression like that of a farmer.

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MONROE

SECTION I.

PERIOD OF SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS.

MARCH 4, 1821—MARCH 3, 1823.

The 4th of March, 1821, occurring on a Sunday, the ceremony of induction at Washington was postponed until Monday, while Tompkins, at New York, took his oath as Vice-President on both the 3d and 5th. 1821. March 4-5. Like all re-elected predecessors Monroe determined that the exercises of his second inauguration should be simple.* Dressed in a full black broadcloth suit of antiquated cut, with shoe and knee buckles, he rode to the Capitol in a plain carriage with four horses and a single colored footman; cabinet officers, each in his carriage and pair, followed; there was neither escort nor a concourse of spectators on the way. On alighting at the Capitol, he made his way into the Hall of Representatives, through a crowd so great as to obstruct some of the dignitaries attending him; not a soldier nor a constable being in sight. His seat was on the platform behind the Speaker's chair, Marshall the Chief Justice being on his right, and the President *pro tem.* of the Senate and late Speaker of the House on the left. The throng in the House and galleries buzzed as the Marine Band struck up a march. After taking the oath, which the Chief Justice administered by merely holding up the book while the President repeated the usual words, Monroe read in a grave and rather low tone of voice an address modestly expressed which recounted

* Monroe was doubtful whether even to deliver an address; but his cabinet confirmed him in the precedent. See J. Q. Adams's Diary.

the main points of his policy. Many of his auditors came up and shook hands with him when he had done; and as he left the building with his suite, a cheering shout went up while the Marine Band played its parting strain.*

Of that illustrious trio of Republican Presidents and Virginians who held the helm for the first quarter of this century and guided the national ark out of the channels of conservatism into the bold open sea of democracy,—indeed of all the five Presidents identified with '76 and the cause of American revolution, of whom he was the last,—Monroe shines as the least conspicuous luminary. He had not the commanding poise of Washington, nor the impetuous self-confidence of the older Adams, nor the fervid philosophy of Jefferson, nor even that logical fertility which made Madison, the precocious father of our Federal Constitution, so admirable an adviser to others. Modest in asserting his own merits, a man who could better weigh advice than tender it, Monroe willingly accorded to these the pre-eminence; having (to quote the words he had just uttered) "no pretensions to the high and commanding claims" of his predecessors, and considering himself "rather as the instrument than the cause of the union" which had given him so spontaneous and hearty a re-election.†

But fame is not turned aside by the modesty of its favorite; nor does fame itself supply the sure criterion of merit. Monroe, although, on the whole, less original, less striking, possessing less salient traits of character than those who had preceded him in the Presidency, was worthy of being ranked among them as superior to each and all in certain of the endowments which grace the executive office. As a firm administrator he surpassed the amiable Madison, who might propose but never could command. Being neither quick nor creative, like Jefferson, he was not so readily led astray by fancies. He knew how to be advised and hold advisers, as John Adams did not. And to Wash-

* See 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary.

† See Monroe's second inaugural address, March 4, 1821.

ington himself he was superior in that lower grade of intelligent statesmanship which we term political sagacity, and which, in the American sense, includes a just appreciation of that popular instinct which, after all, more permanently than the will of any individual, must give force and direction to a government like ours; a government whose chief dependence is upon sympathy and not stateliness. Monroe's long administration of eight years, though detached from war and the tremendous rivalries of England and France, which had driven us scudding hither and thither, was not without its deep perplexities, national and international, through which he navigated well; and if the victories of peace may be pronounced not less renowned than those of war, and success allowed its fair ingredient of good fortune, so long as what the times actually require has been safely accomplished, we must pronounce it not only more entirely successful than any preceding one, but the most immediately successful, as well as the most unanimously applauded of all that American history has yet to show. Once and again our bark was driven towards the hungry rocks; but a careful hand steered us by until the waves fell and the wrinkled sea glittered once more in the sunshine.

Such safe management is not to be ascribed to mere chance nor to favorable opportunity. For in Monroe we had a national leader to whom growth and experience meant everything, and whose acquirements as a statesman, though not shining, were solid. He was ambitious of a good record; he aimed to set an example; but at the same time he was modest for his personal fame, called himself an instrument, and cared more to fulfil than be a figure. He wrought out his best work in silence, "investigating by the midnight lamp the laws of nature and nations;" * he surrounded himself with the ablest advisers, sought their counsel, and encouraged their confidence. He

* This striking phrase is to be found in John Quincy Adams's eulogy, and probably he had seen that light burning in the windows of the Presidential mansion.

was at this last and best epoch of his long public career patient, tolerant, very slow but remarkably correct in conclusions, magnanimous, and considerate. As chief magistrate he took broad and lofty views of public policy; as a man he was, as he had ever been, the soul of honor. He had a quiet energy in directing affairs. His judgment, fallible enough while young and in bad company, had at length ripened into something like excellence of discernment, as even they admitted who had affected to despise his talents. Experience and singular vicissitude, so far from curdling, sweetened a temper naturally hasty and irritable, and his justice was always tempered with mercy.

Not original in his cast of mind, and always liable to be underrated, Monroe owed his high station less to dazzling superiority than his own unflinching perseverance; something, doubtless, to friendship and opportunity, yet more to that sympathy which all feel when one who is seen to fall rises again. Often had he broken his wing against the precipice upon which he now perched so serenely. His firmness yielded to no obstacle, and his ideal of statesmanship was constantly nobler.

Of Monroe's traits, these, perhaps, gave to his administration its chief influence: the conscientious performance of official duty, magnanimity, and the habit of deliberation. As to the first, all are familiar with Jefferson's description of him as one whose whole soul might be turned wrong-side outward without discovering a blemish to the world. Of his rare magnanimity instances are scattered through this whole eight years' record. Daschkoff, who had behaved very badly, was graciously treated when he took his leave; Crawford was not dropped; Jackson's indiscretions were lightly passed over; and Clay, after four years of factious disturbance, had to own an act of unexpected generosity.* Indeed, so unsparing a critic as John Quincy Adams remarks that Monroe's failings leaned to virtue's

* Monroe MSS. In John Q. Adams's Diary, 1817–25, are noted various incidents such as the above, which impressed him strongly on this point.

side, that he indulged everybody, was scrupulously regardful of individual feeling, and exercised too reluctantly the power of harsh discipline and censure.* He certainly was open and unsuspecting, and betrayed a sensation of pain whenever misconduct in those about him was pointed out. But he was so solicitious not to use the public patronage as his own that many said of him that he had appointed his enemies to office in preference to his friends.†

Long used though he had been to public affairs, and robust in constitution, Monroe worried much in private over difficult problems or a passing discontent. He did not easily throw off official burdens, and when a weighty matter of state was pending the counsellor who called could not divert his mind; for he would revert to the subject still uppermost, and take new advice upon its present bearings, leaving the lighter business to wait, instead of dispatching all together. Many a lonely and serious hour did Monroe pass when troubled or perplexed, veiling the deeper sufferings of his sensitive nature from the world. Nevertheless he hid his wounds as a chief magistrate should; and though wavering often while making up his mind, he was firm when the decision was taken. He came to a conclusion at last, and then stood fearlessly by the consequences. "He had," says Calhoun, "a wonderful intellectual patience, and could, above all men that I ever knew, when called on to decide on an important point, hold the subject immovably fixed under his attention till he had mastered it in all its relations. It was mainly to this admirable quality that he owed his highly accurate judgment. I have known many much more rapid in reaching the conclusion, but very few with a certainty so unerring." ‡

* J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1820.

† See Monroe MSS. 1823, letter of Gouverneur urging the transfer of Paulding from one office to another of greater emolument. Monroe was disinclined to comply, because of some distant family connection with the incumbent. And see the eulogy of Justice McLean, of the Supreme Court, 41 Niles's Register.

‡ Monroe MSS., August 8, 1831. This letter, not too laudatory, which was written to Gouverneur on the news of Monroe's death is

Standing, nevertheless, like a breakwater, between the passions of an earlier and later epoch, it cannot be thought strange if the fibre of Monroe's greatness should not in our day be well known or appreciated. Even contemporaries who recalled him as a devoted and often indiscreet partisan in early life, an anti-Federalist in 1787, one so enthusiastic in 1795 over the French republic as to join in the fraternal *accolade*, now petulant, now despondent, now almost vindictive, were slow to believe that he had grown into so great a man. But his soundness was fundamental and its secret spring diligent application.*

Monroe, though liberally educated, was no scholar. His tastes inclined neither to literature nor philosophy, but were absorbed in politics. He read few books on light subjects, but learned chiefly from personal experience and intercourse among men, and was most interested in whatever might subserve the immediate purpose. During his long service at home and abroad he had made himself familiar with the affairs of Europe and his own country. Among ideas presented and the motives for offering them, he discriminated admirably. One found him in conversation agreeable but not striking, slightly reserved, often grave, and in fact preoccupied with his official cares. He wrote kindly and discreetly in his private letters, but seldom in a lively strain, unless vindication of motives was the object, and then he was almost eloquent. Of official documents he prepared many, full of argument, at times very able, but devoid of imagination and often prosy. In his messages as President he inclined much to details, and could not easily compress; his draft was prepared upon loose sheets of paper,† a separate sheet for each subject to be distinctly

in Calhoun's tenderest strain. He accords to Monroe a high station in the eyes of posterity. "Though not brilliant," he says, "few men were his equals in wisdom, firmness, and devotion to the country." This letter has perhaps never appeared before in print. In this same MSS. may be found deserved tributes from Wirt and Richard Rush, and others. See also Adams's eulogy; Watson, Benton, and others, cited in Gilman's Life of Monroe; 4 Madison's Writings (1831).

* See the fair estimate given in Gilman's Life of Monroe.

† "Like Sibylline leaves." J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1824.

noticed, minutes for which he would receive from the proper department. But this draft he would modify or curtail with great good nature after reading it over in Cabinet, if objection was made; and in return, he often took the sting out of foreign dispatches prepared for him, having no inclination to risk a negotiation for the sake of a pungent epithet.

At this interval of six years or more, scarce a tradition can be found as to how Monroe looked, what he said unofficially, or how he conducted himself;* and yet he made extenstive tours while President, and was seen and beloved by all. Cabinet advisers preserve executive traits, it is true, but scarcely more. The inference is that there was nothing odd, nothing striking about his manners or personal appearance. Living for nearly fifteen consecutive years at Washington city, either as Secretary or President, he passed from prime to old age in the midst of its inhabitants. By these he is best recalled as a handsome man of tall, erect figure and placid mien, who rode every day on horseback with a colored groom after him; his dress a drab suit, with light pantaloons reaching to the knees, a dark beaver hat and white-top boots.† His hair was cut short in front and powdered and gathered into a cue behind, and his face smoothly shaved after the custom of olden times. For evening costume he wore various suits, after the fashion of the day, tending, however, to the old style, as became one of his years and station. He was strongly built, broad-shouldered, and in younger days could bear great strain without fatigue.‡

* Neither from Seaton's nor George Ticknor's memoirs nor the works of contemporary travellers can anything valuable be gleaned under this head.

† This writer finds the "white-top boots" of Monroe better remembered by the old inhabitants of Washington than anything else about his person.

‡ Judge Watson, who was in Monroe's family in 1830, was told by Monroe himself that about the time the British occupied Washington, when the burdens of three Departments were upon his shoulders, he did not undress himself for many days and nights, and was in the saddle most of the time. See Gilman's Life of Monroe.

A favorite picture represents Monroe in his prime, enveloped in a dark, high-cut coat of the period, with rolling and indented collar, a waistcoat edged with buff lining, and an ample white neck-cloth spreading its folds over his chest. The face wears a mild, patient, and yet almost sad expression, indicating the struggle of a nervous temperament; the eyes, nearly blue, look from the canvass with kindness more than penetration; and the small, close mouth and dimpled chin learning to be firm, the smooth face, the high but not expansive forehead and delicate features, all bespeak a refinement of nature.* Later in life his appearance is said to have been less romantic and prepossessing.† Stouter, more florid, inclined to stoop, his stature by the last years of his Presidency might have seemed quite moderate. His dress is now described as a little rusty, and his countenance wilted with age and study and care; while, in a forehead deeply furrowed, which the hair, as worn, partly hid, appeared two distinct arches over the eyes which glimmered sleepily from within their large sockets.‡ Indeed, Monroe's last years were full of care and anxiety, and at seventy he seemed fourscore. But those manners which neither captivated nor overawed were the same at his last White House reception as long years back, when governor of Virginia; § and the same awkward but assiduous courtesy which the "British Spy" had remarked, was visible through all the polish of courtly life; affording one proof among many that Monroe never could outgrow his native simplicity. ‖

* This picture, now in the Corcoran Art Gallery at Washington, which is a copy of one preserved by Monroe's lineal descendants, Mr. Corcoran, from personal recollection, pronounces a good likeness.

† See portrait in Harper's Monthly for May, 1884, taken from a painting by Gilbert Stuart, which is owned by Mr. T. Jefferson Coolidge of Boston.

‡ See S. G. Goodrich's Recollections. This was just before Monroe retired from office. Goodrich was strongly Federal in antecedents and sympathies and disposed to regard Monroe as insignificant.

§ See Wirt's British Spy, describing Monroe as Governor of Virginia.

‖ In many details authorities differ much as to Monroe's personal appearance. Goodrich says that he was under size; Wirt that he was

At the outset of his administration, Monroe aimed to restore something of Washington's dignified formality in the executive intercourse. Towards the diplomatic corps in particular, some of whom, like the Abbé Correa, had in Jefferson's day fallen into the easy habit of dropping in at the White House and mingling literature and philosophy, if not business, in a domestic cup of tea,—a habit which Madison had not seen fit to check,—he adopted a reserve more in accordance with the manners of European courts. To these a personal audience was granted on request, and a foreign minister was received on his arrival or departure with something of official state. The President stood attired in a half-military uniform or a full suit of black, the ministers appearing in their full court dress; and stationed in the centre of the room with the Secretary of State on his right, he would receive one's letter of credence and hand it to Adams unopened, making some general response to the short address offered. The Abbé Correa, who, on the strength of seniority, indulged his happy faculty for starting topics of conversation, sometimes essayed to take the official edge off these interviews; but they were seldom prolonged.* Dull though these audiences might be, the diplomatic corps at Washington suffered no such petty vexations and delays as our representatives submitted to abroad. Nor had that corrupting practice of giving presents ever prevailed which the European courts, though somewhat ashamed of it, still permitted. Castlereagh had lately in the course of his Vienna and Paris negotiations received twenty-four snuff boxes, worth each £1000 ster-

about medium height; but the best authorities concur in fixing his height as above the medium, or nearly six feet. Judge Watson says he was about six feet high, perhaps rather more (see Gilman's Monroe). Being broad-shouldered and ungainly, rather than erect, he might easily have seemed shorter than he really was. Goodrich says Monroe was almost destitute of forehead; Judge Watson, that his forehead was broad; the truth lies between the two statements. Goodrich speaks of Monroe's small gray eyes; Watson puts it rightly as blue approaching gray.

* See 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1817, 1819.

ling; while in his own country it was customary to count down the honorarium in solid cash, from the sum total of which, by one of those standing extortions which in Great Britain acquire the force of usage, the master of ceremonies would deduct ten per cent. as his own perquisite from the diplomate who was thus bowed out.* In our country members of Congress were often appointed on foreign missions; and the well settled rule was not, as in other lands, to create a permanent diplomatic force whose members should serve for life, going from one post to another, but to send abroad our representative men for some brief episode of foreign travel or negotiation as the case might be.

The growth of the public business, not to add of society itself at the national capital, justified other departures from the unceremonious ways of Jefferson and his next successor. Regular hours were now fixed for receiving general visitors. Drawing-rooms at the White House were made more select than before, and foreign ministers were not expected to attend them without an invitation. Whether some sort of uniform should not be worn by the high officers of state was cogitated. But Monroe was anxious not to run counter to popular feeling nor personally offend; for true politeness, as he defined it, was right feeling controlled by good common sense.

In imposing the new regulations and drawing somewhat more closely than before the lines of social demarcation at the capital there were found many little disputes to settle. As a rule in the United States birth, wealth, and culture contend for the palm of good society; and the private leaders at our civic centres, who at the present day are quite disposed to scrutinize politics through the eye-glass, may be seen discussing behind their parlor doors whether one of public renown deserves to be let in. But Washington society takes its form and pressure from the chief administration circle, from men in power, and their wives, whatever their antecedents, so long as they are socially

* See 3 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1817.

disposed at all; and hence arises much agitation over little points of etiquette and priority which people elsewhere can afford to laugh at. To Monroe's diplomatic dinners given once or twice a winter the Secretary of State had been invited, thus regularly taking precedence of the other guests, none of whom were ministers of the first grade. The other cabinet officers felt slighted, as though Adams had been treated as premier. But as ministers disliked going to the bottom of the table for three or four heads of departments, Monroe tried the plan of leaving out his cabinet altogether and inviting only private persons to meet the corps; and this pleasing his guests as little, he finally settled upon putting members of the cabinet on his list in turn, thus treating them all alike.* A nicer question of punctilio embroiled the Secretary of State with members of the Senate, a branch of the government always tenacious of the minutiæ of rank, in whose secret book were recorded among other claims to consideration that of receiving a first visit from officers of the cabinet. Adams, who thought the rule should be reversed, availed himself of his recent return from abroad to disregard it. A remonstrance from Senators led to a cabinet meeting, which failed to settle the point; but at the President's request Adams, with a wealth of argument and earnestness worthy of some weightier subject, defined his own position in a letter which the Vice-President showed among the Senators in order to pacify them. Most took the Secretary's explanation like men of the world, but eight or ten still refused all invitations to his house.†

Much of this social jealousy and heart-burning was manifested by the wives of public characters. Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Calhoun, amiable and refined ladies, devoted each to her own husband's popularity, had paid first visits to the wives of all members of Congress who arrived at Wash-

* See 4 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819. Adams himself generously advised the President to take this last way out of the difficulty, though secretly grumbling at the jealousies which had produced it.

† See J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1818–1820.

ington; so that when female society pronounced Mrs. Adams negligent of her own duties in that respect its displeasure became marked. The Secretary's wife told her callers in a sprightly and familiar way that she would receive on Tuesday evening; the evening arrived, and with it only two guests besides her own sisters. Nor did the President's family escape a silent censure; for while this social rebellion was at its height, Mrs. Monroe's first drawing-room opened, so gossip said, to a row of empty chairs.* Mrs. Monroe, a gracious and regal-looking lady, formerly Miss Kortright, of New York, had in youth been a great belle here and abroad. As President's wife she indulged a taste for seclusion, to which growing years and a delicate state of health inclined her. She rarely appeared except on select occasions, determining in her new dignity neither to pay nor return any visits, but deputed the chief honor and burden of formal entertainment to her two daughters, Monroe's only children. Tall, handsome, and agreeable ladies, the younger of these married her cousin, young Gouverneur, of New York, while at the White House. But Mrs. Hay,† the elder child, found the position of President's daughter at first equivocal with ladies of foreign ministers and others who claimed recognition from "her majesty;" for while Jefferson in his day had indulged in peace the whims of a widower, Mrs. Madison, a rare leader among her sex, had with infinite grace reciprocated all the civilities universally accorded to her, making no invidious distinctions whatever, and even taking up the drudgery of first calls without a murmur. Time brought mutual concessions and a better understanding in the White House circle, and the hot debate died out; but Washington society now narrowed its circumference, recognition became

* William W. Seaton's Biography (Dec. 1819).

† She was the wife of a Virginian of some influence, George Hay, who was made a district judge, and died in 1830, about the same time as Mrs. Monroe. Samuel L. Gouverneur, of New York, who survived his father-in- law, had tender relations with Monroe after the latter's retirement from office.

accorded upon stricter terms than before, and, on the whole, official families gained exemption from the task of searching out miscellaneous strangers, who, as modern etiquette here rules it, should make, instead of awaiting, the first call.

The reader is not to measure the festivities of this raw little metropolis, which brought together so attractive a winter society from all parts of the Union, by the standard of its own diluted and even desolate grandeur. Though it slowly grew and clambered up the great trellis placed for its reception, like some neglected vine which shivers and yet strives to fulfill the law of its being, Washington, the nation's only plant, had ceased to be an object of enthusiasm to patriot or speculator. It had no commerce, its inhabitants showed little enterprise, trade was held in disdain by the influential, and the spirit of civic co-operation was wanting. Nothing could be done for it without the assent of Congress; and being to most intents a southern city, here might be seen the slave-block and auction-room, while scattered huts in remote quarters gave the place the air of some negro village. Fine sloping fields and ridges, once covered with clustering trees which might have made a splendid park, but had long since been felled for fuel,* were disfigured by streets and avenues only partially opened and blocks of cheap and ugly brick houses standing aloof from one another. Pennsylvania Avenue was the chief thoroughfare, its two-story buildings serving the double purpose of dwelling and shop. The Capitol and President's mansion were almost the only structures really agreeable to the eye, nor were these yet finished; but in the neighborhood of the latter were a few pretentious residences. A rural neighborhood changing into a civic is rarely attractive, nature upturning that art may begin; but stagnation just at that transition point makes the loveliest landscape an eyesore. And so it was here. Cattle grazed along

* "I wish I were a despot," once said Jefferson, "that I might save those noble trees." Seaton's Biography, 81.

the public reservations; goats from some lofty height scanned the square, carefully plotted, whose owners would gladly have sold by the acre for the price they had paid by the foot; snakes two feet long wriggled into a cabinet officer's mansion, and were killed at the foot of the staircase. On the broad Potomac, seldom furrowed by a keel, statesmen swam for daily exercise unmolested. By old Maryland records it was shown—strange coincidence!—that part of the land on which stood this ambitious city was once called Rome, and its creek Tiber; and hence Moore's sarcastic line,—

"And what was Goose Creek once is Tiber now."

Marrying Marcia Burns, the heiress of Washington, with whose stubborn father our first President drove a negotiation almost as difficult as any Indian treaty, Van Ness, once a member of Congress, had identified himself with the place; and improving a square near the juncture of the Tiber and Potomac and our new Washington obelisk, he built a spacious mansion in the centre of the square, not far from the President's house. A fine suburban house and grounds, lying just northwest of the city, the home originally of the Homeric Barlow, was known as "Kalorama." But Barlow himself had not stayed there long, nor could Washington greatly attract literary and studious men as yet. In 1798 every government which would build a house for its resident minister might have a free lot; but only Portugal accepted the offer, and the lot assigned was not yet built upon. So expansive were the distances that it might still be said that neighbors had to go through the woods to make their visits. Roads were unpaved, badly kept, often impassable in winter and spring; and opposite the Treasury building might be seen a famous slough, into which a carriage-load of statesmen had been emptied not long since. In very hot weather came myriads of flies and vermin; but by that time Congress had usually risen, and few were left except clerks in the government employ, mechanics, trades-people, and some very diligent officials of high grade who bore umbrellas. Taverns

and saloons were grog-shops, about equally disreputable, though Gadsby's, near the Capitol, became a hotel of some pretence. A few Congressmen or visitors could own or rent a dwelling, boarding-houses were much in demand; and after this fashion public men would lodge like a family, leaving their wives at home, and making a "mess," as it was called. Each boarding-house had its mess, to which no stranger was admitted without the common consent and an introduction.

In such a metropolis, where appetites abounded with slim means for gratifying them, the haunts of vice found very little gilding. Wretched drinking-shops, brothels, and gambling-houses abounded; and it seemed as if the polluted dregs of other cities were emptied here every winter. But theatrical shows and concerts derived little patronage from pleasure-seekers amid the round of social entertainments at the height of a winter season. In 1820, when the city charter was carefully amended, much commotion arose over the municipal offices, and the most eminent residents of the place contended for the honor of serving as "lord mayor;" but except for acts which enabled the corporation to drain the low grounds and keep streets and alleys in better order, Congress manifested very little interest. The District militia, a well-trained body, had been of positive service during the war. Clumsy provision was made for administering local justice; but up to 1830, so little revision had been made of the old Maryland or Virginia laws in force when cession was made to the United States, that one who set fire to a mansion-house or stole a horse was liable to be hanged for it. As for that only thoroughfare in Washington city worthy of the name, the poplar-lined avenue lying between the Capitol and the White House, a House Committee was debating as late as 1832 whether to permit a pavement of round or pounded stones to be laid. By February, 1830, the United States had here expended upon national buildings about $3,229,000, and upon all other objects within the District, including streets, avenues, squares, a court-house, jails, a penitentiary, and a public

burying-ground, less than $187,000.* Forced to the mean necessity of applying for everything to a busy legislature of non-residents, wherein the local tax-payers found no representation at all, the District became literally a beggar, and begging in vain so often, it subsided from an eager into a shiftless one. The capital city was the nation's only child; surely the parent was at fault for rearing an offspring in the pride and poverty of great expectations.

Here gathered each winter season a medley of distinguished characters, beautiful women, travellers, and social celebrities from all parts of the Union. After all, there was something cosmopolitan in such a society, softening the provincial lines, and, in the universal wish to be pleasant and pleased, encouraging a free-handed and even hearty hospitality. The influence of the southern aristocracy at this time dominated, but always affably and generously unless southern institutions happened to be discussed. Fond of treating and apt to be profuse, these hosts easily seemed richer than they were. It was the exact and thrifty, those who knew how each dollar was won and spent, that least suited the habits of the place. In order to bear high office at Washington and please this gay winter society, one had to be genial with everybody, and as for cost, calculate nothing.

The arrival of Congress was a signal for commencing the round of entertainment, which lasted through the session, but chiefly, as is still the custom, between New Year's Day and Ash-Wednesday. The Vice-President, most of the cabinet officers, and the Speaker of the House usually entertained once a week. There were occasional balls, public and private; and when Ministers Bagot, De Neuville, and Onis were all about to leave together for Europe, farewell dinners followed in rapid succession. Bagot, with a house full of fine pictures and "elegant litter," had entertained in splendid style, but De Neuville with a lighter grace. At the French minister's parties, to which all vari-

* See public documents of these dates.

eties of people found their way, mysterious dishes were served up, of turkeys without bones, puddings in the form of fowls, fresh cod disguised like a salad, and celery like oysters; and plain Americans were scandalized to find dancing permitted on Saturday night;* but the unbounded kindness of the De Neuvilles to rich and poor swept criticism by. Toilettes, those especially of the young girls, were far less costly in those days than in ours.

While the city was thus crowded, the White House set the example of hospitality. This thoroughly tasteful mansion, which Monroe found freshly painted and plastered upon his return from the eastern tour, was put in order for his first winter's entertainment, and soon used for cabinet meetings; but not until long after he left it was the building completed. The great east room remained unfinished, and temporary stables were provided for the horses. There was a south portico; but as late as 1829 that for the north front, which made part of the original plan, had not even been commenced. Nor had much been spent for interior comfort; and the furniture used by Monroe, much of it hastily picked up by Madison at auction stores in the war days and among second-hand dealers, was quite unworthy of a Presidential establishment. Here, nevertheless, the President entertained in a style hospitable and, as it turned out, far beyond his means. For Mrs. Monroe's Wednesday evening drawing-rooms nine was the hour of arrival. The guests filled not uncomfortably the reception parlor and the oval room beyond, which were warmed by hickory logs blazing in the large open fire-places, and reflecting their glow upon the polished brass andirons. In the oval room hung a portrait of Washington, painted by Stuart. Wax candles shed their soft light from the sconces. Wine was handed about in glasses on large silver salvers, borne by colored servants in dark livery and gilt buttons. Here no invitation was requisite, though a secret line of demarcation was supposed to exist. Breaches of decorum were rare, though

* See William W. Seaton's Biography; Morse's John Quincy Adams.

men in their boots or ill-dressed ladies might be seen, presuming upon their only chance of choice company.*

At these levees Monroe was seen at the upper end of the reception room, with cabinet officers or other dignitaries near at hand. Sometimes he wore a dress sword by his side; for of his military character, which Washington himself had endorsed in 1779, he was not a little tenacious. He shook hands and spoke briefly with those who came up, impressing strangers as a man of good breeding, but little vivacity. The same grave and simple deportment was still more noticeable at the state dinners, which he gave weekly during the session to Congressmen and others in parties of about thirty-five. These were attended chiefly by men, Mrs. Monroe or one of her daughters officiating as hostess. The guests having assembled in the reception room, dinner was announced at six. The dining-room was furnished in good style, but not sumptuously. The service was in china; the table-covering and napkins were of fine cloth; but there was little display of plate. Dishes were handed about by the colored attendants, though most of the guests helped themselves to what happened to be near. The company was too numerous for general conversation, and some felt ill at ease. The ladies rose at the end of the dessert, and left the room attended by one or two of the most gallant men, the others standing until the President, with a wave of the hand, reseated himself. After another glass or two of wine, all betook themselves once more to the drawing-room, rejoining the others. Coffee was served, and by nine o'clock every one left.

A society which presented so little of the home element

* Monroe, in December, 1819, mentioned to his Secretary of State some disorderly occurrences, and seemed to regret that he had not laid these drawing-rooms aside. A department clerk, who had really no right of entrance, brought with him a person who maltreated the servants. At another time the British minister's servant tried to force his way into the hall of entrance. Adams very sensibly advised the President to employ one or two constables to keep order. J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1819. And see further Seaton's Biography; Gilman's Life of Monroe; Cooper's Bachelor; Finch's Travels.

and seemed to thrive upon excitement had naturally its coarser side. Card playing, a favorite amusement with public men, ran easily into gambling, and Clay was one of those who lost heavily by it. Betting at the Maryland races was fashionable with both sexes. In the public room of a Washington tavern, newspapers were ranged on one side and the bar on the other; and throughout the city abounded tippling shops out of all proportion to legitimate trade. And whether one dealt with a Washington constable or a Washington hackman, he found him ferocious in manners and appearance.

Of duels this city had its full share. One of the saddest was that between Commodores Barron and Decatur, in 1820, which closely followed Maria Monroe's wedding. Indeed, the bridal festivities began with a ball at the very house from which the genial host, whose prowess on the ocean had given to his country immortal renown, was carried in his coffin a few days after.* Decatur in an angry correspondence reflected upon Barron's luckless exploit with the *Chesapeake*.† A challenge followed and a hostile meeting on the duelling ground near Bladensburg Sensitive both to any imputation of personal cowardice, they fired so near together that only one report was heard, and both men dropped, wounded in the hip, and to all appearances mortally. Decatur lived but a few hours after he was brought home, suffering great agony, but saying little except to deplore the manner of his death. There was great gloom over this sorrowful affair, and Decatur's funeral was attended by an immense concourse of spectators, estimated at 10,000, and comprising those illustrious at the capital. This solemn caravan marched to Kalorama, where the remains of the victim were deposited in Barlow's family vault, after short prayers and a volley of musketry. As for Barron,

1820. March.

* The house which Commodore Decatur built and occupied, corner of H and 16th Streets, is still standing, and easily identified.

† See vol. ii, p. 146.

though his wound was dangerous, he unexpectedly recovered.*

Navies, in time of peace, really seemed a contrivance for the effusion of blood. Ever since the war of 1812, British officers at Gibraltar had quarreled with officers of our Mediterranean squadron; and duels were so frequent in consequence that the Navy Department ordered them stopped. But to prevent duelling was not easy where those whose honor was touched had determined to fight; and through the United States statute law yielded to a code of honor which imposed secrecy and non-interference upon friends as strictly as it compelled the challenged party to fight. None knew or observed this better than the lawmakers themselves; for not less than seven persons of note, among them a cabinet member and three naval officers of high rank, who had been apprised in season to have prevented the Decatur duel, felt bound as gentlemen to dissuade and no more. John Randolph, who at the funeral kept his horse curvetting about, called for his phaeton, and finally crowded up to the vault just as the coffin was removed from the hearse,† had undertaken, on the news of Decatur's death, to bring the House to a formal expression of respect. The resolve was opposed, however, and voted down; and this sort of negative censure was, after all, the only stigma upon duelling of which a Congress in that day felt capable.

The original design of a temple adapted alike to all religious bodies had now quite disappeared from the plan of Washington city; and, as elsewhere, the different Christian sects began to draw in separate congregations and erect their separate houses of worship. Reticent always upon religious matters, Monroe, as one of the Episcopal faith, attended St. John's Church, a homely edifice of concrete,

* 18 Niles's Register; 5 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; 1 Sargent's Reminiscences; Seaton's Biography.

† See J. Q. Adams's Diary, which notes all this as one of Randolph's tricksy humors to make himself conspicuous.

lately built near the White House. But many of the sojourners here still took their way on Sundays to the Capitol, where religious services were now conducted in the new Representatives' chamber. It was here that in the midst of the great Missouri controversy appeared one Sunday a young man of surpassing eloquence, whose hearers were stirred by a splendid passage of his sermon in which America was advantageously compared with all other countries, ancient and modern. It was Edward Everett, fresh from Europe and his travelling experiences, who had been perfecting himself abroad in Greek and Hebrew, for the duties of a Harvard professorship to which he was lately chosen. Everything about this man deepened the impression of eloquence while he spoke; his compact figure, a Grecian head surmounted by curly auburn locks, a radiant face, a silvery voice tremulous with fervor, graceful gestures, language well chosen and full of chaste thought and figurative expression; and withal a consummate art, extending to the very details of dress. Everett rose steadily as the classic orator of public occasions. His vocation, into which he was already turning by an academic by-path, was to stir American patriotism by holding up the great patterns of the past, ancient and modern, and impart enthusiasm to the respectable and secure. This Sunday oration at the Capitol preceded by scarcely five years the orator's re-appearance under the same dome for secular work, the same theme inspiring his whole career.*

As the reader has already observed,† the inevitable tendency of our politics was towards a complete separation of Church and State. We were, by colonial origin, a Christian, nay, a Protestant people; but toleration of all creeds and of the individual conscience was the moving spirit of our religion. Any public preference, therefore, of a particular sect must have proved intolerable in principle, and the development of public opinion made it equally so in prac-

* See Seaton's Biography; J. Q. Adams's Diary.

† Vol. ii. p. 251.

tice. Hence that utter though gradual disestablishment throughout the several States, which cast all religious denominations alike upon voluntary support, and swept away the tithes and taxation once enforced for their benefit. It seemed a hazardous experiment, and to many devout men like beating down religion itself. But the spirit of emulation in good works, and, better still, of generous and unselfish devotion, which the voluntary appeal stimulates, is witnessed already by the rich gifts of private munificence, by hundreds of glittering spires and well-endowed institutions of charity. After all, God's work will stand because it is His. True was it, nevertheless, that in some States of this Union an organized ministry of the gospel, a class whose best work demands some sort of immunity from temporal cares, had so clashed at times with secular government as to make the abolition of tithes seem an appropriate means of resentment. American thought, with its English tincture of sobriety, had never descended in sacred things to the depths of French skepticism; yet the influence of Jefferson and his party must have tended steadily to unseat the illiberal priesthood of whatever denomination, and by making its members wholly dependent upon private maintenance, subject them and their polity to the influence, if not the direction of their supporters. They looked at the human side of the clergy, and found them, with snug livings and pulpits moreover to preach from, a class not so much detached from worldly concerns, in working out a divine mission, as banded together against the political tenets of a liberal party. While the church teaches only the gospel of the Divine Master, her kingdom is not of this world; but exegesis is human and slides easily into civil interpretation, and no pulpit should interpret transient politics unless at least all pulpits are equally free.

This disestablishing tendency was peculiarly humiliating in these days to New England Calvinism, though the Episcopal Church in Virginia had felt the axe many years earlier. The orthodox clergy, the most learned body in these pilgrim communities, had, from the days of the Mayflower, given a

strong direction to things secular. Tenacious, accordingly, of the methods as well as the doctrines by which the Puritan State had risen to greatness, pulpits had been set, like so many Plymouth rocks, against Jeffersonism, the democracy, and the lax tendencies of French philosophy. It was a sad, a painful sight from 1809 to 1814 to see these New England illiberals, in their utter distrust of those in national power, whom they sincerely believed to be in secret league with Tophet, Napoleon, and the Jacobin clubs, riding the lean shank of Federalism straight towards the abyss of disunion. The new Connecticut constitution, the fruit of rebellion against intolerance, left Massachusetts the only State in the Union where compulsory taxation for religious worship still prevailed; for the New Hampshire toleration act was passed in 1819, and when the people of Maine separated they separated from the system. In the dismembered Commonwealth the rule had come down to this, that persons were allowed to choose their religion, but must support some religion, so that if not attending anywhere, one's payment still went to the Congregational church.

But meanwhile this congregational establishment itself was parting asunder because of the schism between Orthodox, or the old Calvinists, and Unitarians. And since each congregation or independent parish might call its own preacher, a struggle had begun in many New England towns for the tangible property and endowments, and, so far as might be, the tithes, belonging to the old parish church. They who were left in the minority had to associate anew and build their separate meeting-house; and this, the practical result of sectarianism itself, doomed finally the alliance of Church and State in that section of our Union which had defended it longest. For between Unitarianism and Orthodoxy arose a bitter antagonism; proselytes of the new school, whose secession dates about 1815, entering a sort of protest against the stern theology of the Westminster catechism, which had so long kept New England in the leading-strings of thought. The preaching of Channing inspired this movement, which was an intellectual

one and had already gained control of Harvard University. By 1821 the new sect had sown seed in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore; and the simultaneous choice by Congress, while Everett's reputation was fresh, of a Unitarian chaplain for the House and a Methodist chaplain for the Senate, admitted that liberal Christianity had won the national respect.* But Unitarianism made its chief converts in New England; and Boston, where it organized as a national association in 1825, continues the American headquarters ever since, so that even the missionaries are seen to drift back thither for sympathy. It is not in doubt but in overcoming the doubt that religious faith triumphs, and free thought, unless it ends in formulating some sounder creed, is a failure. No preaching more surely argues that a ministry and a Christian association may be dispensed with than that which proclaims the individual reason sufficient for working out the lessons of the heart, and glorifies the natural above the supernatural. But Unitarianism attracted at this time those of awakening intellect and sober life in and about New England's chief capital, by its negation on the one hand of gloomy and unessential dogmas, and on the other so cautious a demarcation of religious truth that susceptibilities were not offended but rather lulled to sleep. For among these respectable classes might be seen strong traces of the old habits of order and morality; they were conscious, too, of literary superiority. Moreover, a state of worldly ease induces less the impatient longing for a readjusted existence hereafter, so long as one may gratify himself and others in this life by benevolent gifts. To make money, do good with it, and rise by it, might appear the mainspring of success, almost of religion itself. But the external forms of Christianity were still greatly regarded here, and no one who valued his social standing dared absent himself at the appointed hours of worship.

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* This House chaplain was Jared Sparks, of Baltimore, who, like Everett, was retiring into literary pursuits at this time, and afterwards became likewise President of Harvard University.

To abolish this religious taxation, together with the provisions for maintaining "public Protestant teachers of piety, religion, and morality," and the right, moreover, of "enjoining upon all the subjects" an attendance upon their instructions, was one of the objects proposed in the Massachusetts Convention of 1820. Such had been the reverence for dusty charters and forms in this old Commonwealth that the constitution of 1780, with its prolix and pompous phraseology, its precise distinctions of title between "His Excellency" and "His Honor," its oaths abjuring the king and declaring Massachusetts "a free, sovereign, and independent State," its religious and property qualifications of various kinds (the latter computed in pounds, shillings, and pence), its careful investiture of the Governor with all the details of authority appertaining to "commander-in-chief of the army and navy," its excellent town-meeting system of suffrage, its style of the legislature as the general court, and the whole framework, showing, as it were, the blood-stains of the Revolution in which it originated, had hitherto been preserved sacredly intact; even the later adoption of a Federal constitution annulling by inference only such of its provisions as might conflict with the plan of perpetual union. Dissatisfaction being expressed in some quarters, the people were asked, in 1795, whether it was expedient to revise this instrument. They answered in the negative. But now, in 1820, Maine having been dismembered, revision was carried by a large popular vote; and accordingly delegates were chosen to a convention, which met at the Boston State House, on Beacon Hill, November 15th, 352 members being present. The venerable John Adams declining the honor, Isaac Parker, Chief Justice of the State, was chosen president of this body. Widely opposite views here prevailed; and while Republicans and the religious toleration party shaped the work, conservatives and the ruling set resisted. Though many of State eminence attended the convention, none were so conspicuous in debate and influ-

1820.

November.

ence as Daniel Webster and Joseph Story. Both were conservatives, the one by training and tradition, the other because of influences to which he yielded after he took his seat on the bench with Marshall. Since becoming a Bostonian, Webster had easily taken his place in the front rank of his profession, and by his conduct of the Dartmouth College case endeared himself to both his original and adopted State. In the present body his meed was that of a statesman among his new fellow-citizens; and admirably did he fulfil the hopes of that class which in politics abhorred the radical temperament, and yet stood ready to concede something to the progressive spirit of the age. Webster and Story worked harmoniously, and the impression they made upon the jury of the people was stronger than upon the delegates themselves; for out of fourteen articles which the convention agreed to submit only nine were adopted at the polls, and these, for the most part, of lesser consequence. The religious alteration of the bill of rights (which in truth made a compromised sort of expression) was rejected; that, too, which altered the time of the elections and of beginning the political year; that which rid the State Senate of its property basis, a reform opposed by Webster with great force and ingenuity; and that affecting the tenure of the judiciary. But the franchise, which had hitherto been confined to persons worth £60, was enlarged; the Christian test for office was abolished; and the most important amendment of all provided for specific amendments in the future without resort to a convention at all. Through this last door were afterwards admitted some of the rejected propositions: in 1831, the change of the political year from May to January, together with annual elections in November, after the national custom; in 1833, the final establishment of the voluntary system in matters of religion; and, much later, changes dispensing altogether with representation on the basis of property.* The sober after-thought of this State

1821.

* See Convention of 1820; Hough's Constitutions; 20 Niles's Register.

compels each radical change; and never to this day has Massachusetts superseded a fundamental charter utterly antiquated in expression, but broadens down slowly with new amendments, after the English habit of mind; admitting even these as though reluctant to base any change upon radical principle, always more sentimental over local government than most sister States, and independent enough to bend little to their example.

One of the Massachusetts amendments adopted in 1821 permitted the grant of a city charter to any town containing at least 12,000 inhabitants. Boston availed herself of the opportunity thus offered to throw off the selectmen and town-meeting, whose rule was fast becoming a hubbub. For the honor of first mayor citizens so eminent as Josiah Quincy and Otis contended, the latter giving up together his seat in the Senate and his experiment of national usefulness; for the odium of the Hartford Convention, whose loyalty he manfully upheld to the last, was too much for him. Even at their own homes the war record of each defeated his plans for the present, though each in turn enjoyed the municipal office somewhat later, and well performed its duties. No choice this year having been made at the first poll, Quincy declined to be a candidate. Otis's friends withdrew his name, and, with great unanimity, John Phillips, a moderate conservative of the Brooks sort, was chosen.* 1821.

In several States besides Massachusetts, effort, not always successful, was made at this period to amend the fundamental law. The Vermont Council of Censors, in septennial session, unanimously agreed to call a convention at Montpelier to consider certain amendments, one of which proposed a legislature of two branches in place of the single assembly; but after a brief session the convention, when called, decided to leave the constitution 1820–22.

* Newspapers of the day; Niles's Register, etc.; Quincy's Municipal History of Boston.

untouched.* In Rhode Island was agitated the question of a written constitution to as little purpose; nor was it until 1842 that this State of great resources and small population exchanged the royal charter from Charles II., under which the united plantations had flourished for nearly two centuries, for one of American pattern. The people of New Hampshire, their sense being taken, as the existing constitution provided, voted almost unanimously against calling a State convention to revise it.† The harsh inequalities of local representation, which the distrustful system of some older States still maintained, loudly demanded reform. By the Maryland constitution, for instance, electors were chosen to elect for five years a senate, which, once elected, might fill its own vacancies; so that quite lately this body was actually self-created, except for one member, and amid the factious strife of two Houses the interests of the State were disregarded. Neither in Maryland nor in Virginia, however, did one political party or another appear at all disposed to do away with the rotten borough system, so as to give persons or even property a just voice in affairs; but elections were still held by districts, regardless of what might be their relative wealth or population.

Better success in constitutional reform was attained in New York, in spite of an incessant turmoil between Clintonians and the anti-Clintonians,—"Bucktails," or Tammany men, as they were called,—all of whom professed the republican creed of the nation. There is always something unknown and ignoble in the machinery of New York politics, sensibly as voters are apt to decide. The mode of operating is not found without great study, nor when found does it reward the pains. But by "Bucktails," we may observe, was meant the Tammany men, the name

* See Hough's Constitutions ; 20 and 23 Niles's Register. It was not until 1836 that a legislature of two Houses was established in this State by constitutional amendment.

† Hough's Constitutions. A convention was called in 1824, but its work was rejected.

being applied from a part of their dress. Clinton, in his brusque way, had affronted the Tammany men at Albany, and a feud was the consequence. Van Buren, his political rival, and in methods his antipodes, contrived to give these Bucktails a gradual ascendency in the legislature; and the "Albany regency," so called, a band of able men, among whom Van Buren stood first, availed themselves of Clinton's errors to gain in a few years, by a soft, conciliating perseverance, the entire control of the Republican party in the State, with its patronage and machinery. Canals and internal improvement they turned in and supported; soon spreading the impression that Clinton was not carrying on the work well.* One object of this Van Buren ring was to carry a constitutional convention in the State. A bill introduced into the Assembly in 1818 with that end in view, and mainly for abolishing the council of appointment, was rejected. Clinton opposed the whole movement as thus initiated; but Van Buren, who, as a State Senator with national aspirations, had adhered closely to Tompkins and his fortunes, laid his plans skillfully, nothing daunted. Under his lead a bill calling for a constitutional convention was passed in 1821, soon after the choice of Monroe and Tompkins electors by the legislature. These were stormy times in the New York legislature; for Clinton, though re-elected Governor over Tompkins, who was the Tammany candidate, found the legislature organized against him and dashed recklessly at it. He charged openly that the federal patronage in the navy-yard and post-offices had been employed against him through Van Buren's procurement; having first alluded officially to "an organized and disciplined corps in our elections." He took ground, too, and more justly, that the choice of Presidential electors, still reserved by the legislature to itself, ought to be given to the people of the State. All this, however, could not defeat the bill. The people voted in favor of a convention by an immense majority,

1821.

* Clinton papers, 50 Harper's Monthly.

and chose delegates to meet at Albany in August. This convention being made up chiefly of Clinton's enemies, Tompkins was almost unanimously chosen its presiding officer; and, adjourning by November, this body offered to the people of the State a new and improved framework of government, among the signers of this instrument being Rufus King. The people ratified by an immense majority.* The councils of appointment and revision were by this constitution finally abolished, subordinate State officers were made eligible by the legislature, the right of suffrage was extended, representation was henceforth based upon a State census to be taken every ten years, and a circuit judiciary system was created. Ministers of the gospel were declared ineligible to office. Lotteries were forbidden, and no bank or other corporation was hereafter to be chartered without the assent of two-thirds of both branches of the legislature. As in Massachusetts and under the federal constitution, a means of amendment in future without the necessity of calling a convention was afforded. Under this new constitution Judge Yates was chosen the first Governor without any noteworthy opposition, and for the present Clinton was forced into retirement under a cloud of obloquy, though he still held his canal commissionership. One result of this victory was the election of Van Buren to the United States Senate to succeed Sandford, whose term expired in 1821.

August–November.

1822. January.

The census of 1820 showed an aggregate population in the United States which consisted in round numbers of 9,634,000 against 7,240,000 in 1810; the whites numbering 7,862,000, the slaves 1,538,000, and the free persons of color 234,000. War, with its usual decimation by disease and death, and the check it places upon matrimony, not to add the failure of immigration for some three years in consequence, had brought the relative increase on the

* See 20 and 21 Niles's Register; Hough's Constitutions, etc.; 23 Niles's Register, 172.

whole somewhat below the former average, though returning peace now repaired all breaches very rapidly. Since 1810 six new States had been added to the Union, a feat of national fecundity without a parallel in our history.* This changed in no slight degree the adjustment of political forces, into which a thousand delicate elements might enter. Already was the sceptre of national leadership passing into new hands. Virginia, with all her slaves to swell a master's dignity, was at length outnumbered in population by the freemen of New York, a State whose ensigns advanced as first in rank and emulous of empire, in the material if not the sentimental sense of the word. Behind pushed Pennsylvania with sturdy step, crowding close upon her late preceptor, and soon, too, to pass her by. Ohio, hoydenish in politics, hastened to be next in numerical order, ranking the third already, or next to Pennsylvania for representative power. Only by the count of soul by soul, regardless of color and social condition,—a count wholly fallacious for the adjustment of political rank and influence under our constitution as then applied,—could Virginia, once first, claim still to be the second State of the Union; and even under so favorable a comparison it was clearly written that she would soon sink to the fourth and lower still, as one enterprising free State after another outstripped her in the race and passed on.

New York's rapid advance in wealth and numbers was easily accounted for. The constantly increasing trade of her great seaport, already, perhaps, the second emporium of foreign commerce in the world, was enhanced immensely by the timely adoption of a wise, liberal, and for the times immense system of internal improvement, all without the aid of the national purse, by means of which the whole back country of a State, remarkably favored by nature for the united and exclusive development of its commercial resources, was rapidly peopled, and a means of traffic, cheap

* Since this was written (1884) Congress paralleled this record by the admission of new States, 1889–90.

and expeditious beyond all precedent, laid open for the products of the rising west. What sons admirably qualified for public station had done so much for their own State, and so little for the Union, as the Clintons and the Livingstons of New York? Aided by Chancellor Livingston, Fulton had given the Hudson and the modern world the first steamboat and the first surprising instance of quick locomotion. And now to the busy Hudson a Clinton was uniting by an artificial watercourse the waters of Lake Erie; thus making of the whole State, as it were, a vast channel through which products should pour into the lap of New York city for distribution, enriching its trade beyond measure; besides giving to a hundred towns and villages on the way a generous livelihood. Buffalo, almost as remote from civilization before the war of 1812 as the brute creature it typified, was advancing to a town of 15 or 20,000 inhabitants, and throughout Central New York, on the line of the Erie Canal, villages sprang up, as in a night, not to wither but endure. Millions of arable acres in the central and western counties of the State were being brought into cultivation, the ready market offered for their product not suffering them to lie waste; manufacturing and agricultural industries and the means of subsistence were steadily increasing. And thus were the forethought and enterprise of a republic directed chiefly to the practical problems of life; wherein one grand element of success consists in being the first to appropriate and apply a novel idea for securing wealth before something better is discovered.

Pennsylvania competed with New York in the race for wealth, but with a more plodding energy. There was not the same banding together of the social elements for a public purpose; her population was discordant; her politics full of fury and violence; none of her leaders great, and the stolid citizens disposed to keep to the routine of family and business and a simple but congenial circle, caring for little which did not touch their personal interests. They amassed and accumulated, but were slow to learn

the character and resources of their own State, nor made such learning a matter of public pride so much as of private profit. Emigration and immigration here went rapidly on together. Nevertheless powerful efforts were made in this State to facilitate inland intercourse with the west and keep the central line of traffic unbroken; for New York's prospective greatness was a constant spur. Manufactures in Pennsylvania were an old established industry; and finally, such was the mineral wealth of coal and iron imbedded in this vast region, that prosperity herself seemed always preparing a surprise.

Ohio had all the impulsiveness, the freshness, the feverish ardor, the over-confidence of full-blooded youth. Headstrong, impetuous, rejoicing in freedom, self-reliant and yet rudely educated, this State, living for the present and future, had plunged into paper speculations, as though determined to learn nothing from the past. Time would correct such follies. From the thirteenth in the Union, ten years earlier, this State had by 1820 grown to the fifth in population; old North Carolina, the fourth, having a lesser apportionment because of her slaves. With wheat, corn, wool, flax, dairy products, domestic animals, Ohio's fertile soil supplied distant markets; nor were the manufactures of this State contemptible. The Erie Canal, nearly completed, promised the choice of the New York and New Orleans markets to these inhabitants, and population already thickened in the north of the State, hitherto almost a wilderness. To intersect this State so as to make easy water communication between Lake Erie and the Ohio River was now the favorite project.

As for the south, the new pressure of population in the direction of Louisiana and Missouri was arrested somewhat at Alabama, a State having good and cheap lands, well adapted to cotton raising, and just now growing so rapidly as to be the wonder of that section. The demand for southern staples fast rising, planters with fortunes to make had drawn off somewhat from the older slave States into the new and lately wild lands opened between the mountains

and the Mississippi. But South Carolina and Georgia held their own, while Virginia and North Carolina, if not Maryland, increased little except in their new western counties, or where the local interests were not strongly slave-holding.

The decline of Virginia in power and influence was now undeniable. Many are skeptical of estimates based upon the multiple of procreation, but our American experience cannot eliminate it. Numbers, free numbers, constitute, after all, in this Union, the foundation of political power, and where a State neither prospers nor can be made to prosper, statesmanship and national influence depart together. Individual example may exert force, but not unless there is a vital constituency behind it. As a member of the Union, Virginia was not set to the meridian of a new era. Her golden age glowed in a vanishing horizon. Her illustrious sons were dead or dying, and an inferior race of public men aspired to their vacant places. They made way for one another in the rotation of dignities. They discoursed upon national affairs as though they belonged to another planet.* Virginia assumed to be the champion of southern rights in these times, of the unlimited right to take slaves into the new territory; but the cotton-growing States, South Carolina and Georgia, for instance, were the real leaders upon such issues. The tobacco worm destroyed her crops; in her exhausted soil they planted herring-heads to make the corn come up; † and finding slave labor profitless, they took to the breeding of slaves for gain, supplying the new southwestern market from their stud establishments. Old Virginia and the tide-water country went backwards and downwards, stinted of food; and no more painful type of a swaggering but seedy gentry was ever known than that on which was presently bestowed the nickname of "F. F. V." ‡

Such was the gradual tendency in the Old Dominion

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* See this expression in 6 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, Jan. 2, 1825.

† See speech of Benton in 1826.

‡ One of the "first families of Virginia."

when Jefferson's University was erected in the little town of Charlottesville, near Monticello; an institution nobly planned, but not likely under such surroundings to fulfil the highest hopes of its founder. For since no University in this Union may hope to be truly national, it is needful that the State which fosters a new institution of learning be one where students and endowments shall not fail. Both Harvard and Yale had grown up in a neighborhood where education was honored. But where were Virginia common schools, and who were her common people? Free labor here was not honored, but dishonored. Many who were called upon to bear arms might not vote. The poor were kept low, while the gentlemen who ruled were impoverished by a superabundance of land and slaves. Had the soil been broken up among small farmers and tilled with economy, the reddish yellow soil might have yielded better reward. Under the old borough system, moreover, while it was the western part of the State which grew, it was the eastern which ruled. New York had legislated liberally for her back counties, but not so Virginia. And it was easily perceived that the new school of Virginia statesmen made much of constitutional points and questions of abstract political right, while for practical and economical legislation, such as develops the industry and resources, they showed no aptitude. It is a profound statesman who can make a large State from a small one; but of Virginia policy, as it was said, the present effect appeared, on the contrary, to make a small State out of a large one.

Monroe's hearty re-election for a second term arrested the ambitious combinations formed to destroy him. Competition, henceforth, was simplified to the honor of succeeding, four years later, to the vacancy. That competition was open to all; and in the absence of issues important enough to engage the national attention, the strife for the next Presidency promised to be that of individuals, and a most ignoble one. Scarcely then had Monroe taken his new oath of office before the political press put forth the

1821.

several names of favorite candidates for the succession. Those most prominent were Crawford, John Quincy Adams, Calhoun, and Clay. As among these rival suitors, three of whom were in his own cabinet, and indeed as to all others whose names might be brought forward, Monroe promptly announced himself neutral, and that attitude he inviolably preserved. Other names were mentioned, as for instance De Witt Clinton, Vice-President Tompkins, and Lowndes of South Carolina. Each candidate had his friends among the politicians as well as the people; and as the friend of one was of necessity the opponent of all the others, the strain of depreciation soon became general.

All this electioneering centred in Washington, where many partisans influential with Congress generously assumed the task of providing the American people with a sixth President, but by the ungenerous means of caucus machinery and the old plan of a nomination by Congressmen. In procuring the needful pledges for such operations, Crawford had now the decided advantage; for his plans had been craftily laid for the succession ever since 1816, when he had made a merit of withdrawing in Monroe's favor and the only question remained whether that succession should take effect in four years or eight. Aided by the Treasury patronage, this faction had been well kept up, extended, and inspired with the consciousness of exerting a positive influence in affairs. Various newspapers were strongly cemented into this Crawford interest;* for the gain or loss of public printing had much to do in these times with the livelihood of the third estate and its adhesion to a public man. These presses gave signals to one another, and the signal at Washington was given by the *City Gazette*, a sheet conducted by Treasury clerks. A Virginian by birth, a Georgia slaveholder and a southerner, Crawford felt confident of that support from his section

* Chief of these were the Richmond Enquirer, the National Intelligencer, the National Advocate of New York (by means of Van Buren), the Democratic Press of Philadelphia.

which had hitherto been almost indispensable and to northerners constantly denied. But Crawford's danger was that he had been entered too early and too long. Slender as were his claims to public distinction,—for he had made a respectable Secretary and no more, and in all cabinet questions had manœuvred so as to put the odium upon others and gain every advantage by their errors,—the longer he waited as senior candidate the fewer were his chances. The methods he relied upon, too, were those of an old-time candidate; he did not study to good purpose the signs in the air that the people had begun to move for themselves. And coming first upon the ground, he encountered all the annoyance of fighting off intruders, and, besides, the risk of drawing upon himself their combined warfare.

Calhoun and Adams appear to have been at this time quite friendly; and though disagreeing with his cabinet associate in some points of policy, Adams praised highly his philosophic temper, his profound views in affairs, and the patriotism and purity of his character; and he was particularly struck by Calhoun's freedom from all sectional and factious prejudices.* Unlike Wirt, who showed the Virginia bias for strict interpretation, he rejoiced that this Carolinian showed in cabinet debate no petty scruples whatever about constructive powers and State rights.† A different Calhoun this, surely, from the Calhoun of later times. But Calhoun at this period of life was a national man, with national aspirations; and as a young southerner he talked considerately. He could afford to wait; the next President ought to be a northern man, and of northern men Adams, he felt, deserved the preference. But it looked as if Adams had no chance; and, if so, why should he not stand against any other southern man? And especially against Crawford, whom he bitterly hated; for Crawford had instigated the late attacks in Con-

* "A man" Adams pronounces him at this time "of fair and candid mind, of honorable principles, of clear and quick understanding, of cool self-possession, of enlarged philosophical views, and of ardent patriotism." J. Q. Adams's Diary, October, 1821.

† Diary, September, 1822.

gress upon the War Department which ended in curtailing its expenditure.

Clay, too, had appeared disposed to co-operate with Adams, or at least, to propitiate his good will. Private losses compelled this genial statesman to give up public life for a few years and practice his profession. Before he left Washington he called at the State Department and spoke with regret of his late differences with the President, and modestly enough of his own future expectations.* But Clay's friends, who were a legion, turned to advantage in every possible way his temporary absence from affairs, nor was it long before Clay was as ambitious of the stakes as any one. An English custom, which served to keep a candidate before the public gaze,—that, namely, of giving him a formal dinner, and calling him to his feet on a complimentary toast,—was now coming into vogue in our politics, and Clay was one of the first to take advantage of it, as he doubtless could most gracefully.

1821. March.

John Quincy Adams, critical of all candidates, and of none more than himself, considered with friends how his own canvass could be successfully launched. Despising in heart the little tricks by which men rise in popularity, and abhorring intrigue, he was after all deeply ambitious of an honorable promotion at the people's hand, and regarded with very little patience the idea of ingratiating one's self with Congress instead of proving to the people that one's work best deserved the civic crown. He had strong claims for the Presidential office. He was Secretary of State, and long precedent made that office the stepping-stone to the highest. His training for chief magistrate was superior to that of his rivals. The best achievements of these eight years had been, and were likely to be, those of his department. The times called for a northern President, and among northern candidates he was the one most naturally selected. His views of national policy were liberal, often profound, and always honest. But the temper and cast of

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5 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs.

his mind were such that he and his friends had almost abandoned in despair a contest in which pre-eminent service alone could not win, but arts in which he was deficient. He could not organize a personal following and magnetize men like Crawford or Clay. His manner was cold and constrained, and with all his experience of courts, public life, and well bred society, he had not kindly ways in dealing with simple men, nor the tact which refuses a favor without wounding. In society he seemed taciturn, unsocial, often morose, with an unfortunate capacity for saying blunt things in a rasping voice, and offending whether he meant to or not. A sort of steel tegument he bore about with him, somewhat as the tortoise carries its shell, finding relief beneath such a cover from the malignity of enemies, and when trodden upon, discharging his own venom silently, as if to work off all unchristian resentment harmlessly, or at least so that the secret should be between himself and posterity; but while thus protected he cut himself off from that interchange of joy and sorrow, which after all makes the stuff of human friendship, and drew respect, rather, as one who lives by rule and not by sympathy. For all this, a decent gratitude drove people at this time necessarily to canvassing a man of such positive ability and conspicuous service for the Presidency, among the various candidates. His probity, plain-dealing, and freedom from cliques and combinations were stated as strong points in his favor. A letter from old Governor McKean to the elder Adams, which predicted in 1817 that the new Secretary of State would be the next President, tickled a father's vanity too pleasantly not to be put into the newspapers. And about this time Plumer, Hopkinson, and other friends agreed to stir up a New England demonstration on behalf of this eastern candidate. Even this was not as easy as might appear; for in that section were many in power who never could forgive Adams for his apostasy from the Federalists in 1807; and men who supported him would declare that they did so, not with heartiness, but from a cold sense of duty.

Had the Empire State at this time presented some candidate with an unbroken support, the north, most probably, would have united upon him. But that State, as we have shown, was torn asunder between rival factions. Both Clinton and Tompkins, the rivals naturally mentioned, were men of national renown. But Tompkins had reached his pinnacle; and the influence which under brighter auspices might have been his, Van Buren now carried over to Crawford and the regular Democracy. As for Clinton, it was pitiable to see how blindly his ambition made him calculate, so that he reached out to grasp what might offer in Pennsylvania and Ohio, while his own State was slipping from him. With the middle and northwest section in his favor, he flattered himself that as a northern candidate he need not fear New England pretensions,* nor even Adams himself. Thus preoccupied, Clinton showed by his pen that if he could not raise himself he at least had the gift of dragging rivals down.† Strange is it that men of imperial traits of character should be so disfigured by their self-seeking ambition. Clinton had a strong will, good literary tastes, generosity to friends and supplicants, grand conceptions for the public welfare; but to govern, to rule the nation, was the disturbing aim, the infatuation of his life; and to gain the Presidency he intrigued and attempted coalitions, impossible as they were daring, with scarcely a cessation for twenty years. His political discretion was by no means equal to his perseverance. He fought in politics as men fight a duel, ready to shoot or be shot down, not for principle but honor. Of imposing personal appearance, —for he was over six feet high,—dignified, and well proportioned, with an intellectual and well poised head, curly

* See Hammond's Political History of New York; Clinton's letters published in 50 Harper's Monthly. Clinton appears to have purchased the once potent pen of William Duane in 1822.

† Clinton's private letters of 1822 show him very censorious as to other Presidential candidates. Crawford was "as hardened a ruffian as Burr;" Calhoun was "treacherous, a thorough-paced political blackleg;" Adams was "in politics an apostate, in private life a pedagogue, and everything but amiable and honest." See 50 Harper's Monthly.

chestnut hair, regular features, light brown eyes, and soft complexion, he was altogether the fit model of a Grecian Apollo; and as if to heighten the resemblance, there was something in his manner which somehow gave beholders to understand that incense was the condition upon which his good gifts depended.

All this choice canvassing, it is seen, left out Jackson, whose good fortune depended upon quite a different range of influences. A new batch of quarrels helped his popularity, on the whole, though it brought the President to the verge of vexation. Under an act of the late Congress, which reduced the military peace establishment,* Brown was kept in service as the sole major-general, Gaines and Scott being the brigadiers. Jackson, consequently, must either have been thrown out or degraded in rank; but the President avoided an awkward dilemma by commissioning him Governor of East and West Florida, under the law which provided for carrying into execution the new treaty with Spain.† This appointment Jackson accepted, though not without having a last surly fling at the commanding general in his parting orders.‡ Leaving Nashville in April, he went to Pensacola by way of New Orleans, where he had an angry dispute with the branch Bank of the United States, which refused to honor his draft upon the State Department for a large advance.§ Next on Spanish soil there was trouble at once; for Callava, the Spanish governor at Pensacola, had to await orders from Cuba before he could make transfer to the United States. Having arrived promptly in May, here Jackson fretted two full months, suspecting treachery, and learning to detest the Spaniard more and more every day. At length, to his re- 1821. April-July.

* Act March 2, 1821.

† Act March 3, 1821.

‡ 2 Parton's Jackson; 21 Niles's Register. The ill-natured remark above alluded to consisted in criticising an order "signed Jacob Brown," which related more especially to the punishment for desertion. Jackson's tone is very disrespectful.

§ Parton's Jackson.

lief, the formalities of cession were completed. Colonel Butler being commissioned as his representative at St. Augustine, the Spanish and American flags were exchanged there, July 10th, under salutes of artillery, and our troops marched into the fort as the Spanish garrison filed out. The possession thus formally taken of East Florida was by the 17th of the month extended to Pensacola and West Florida. This latter cession Jackson received in person, attended by his staff, but ill-temper on both sides forbade much ceremony.

So late in the session was the treaty ratified that Congress had not carefully matured its bill for the government of Florida. Large discretionary powers of a vague though temporary character were confided in the President, both for taking and holding possession of the ceded province. Under this act no less than three commissions had been transmitted to Jackson,—for receiving possession, for ruling as governor, and for carrying the treaty into full effect. Hence his position was an anomalous one, and inclined him to exercise the powers of a Spanish governor much after the Spanish way. But the President had appointed a secretary for each province, one to reside with Jackson at Pensacola, the other at St. Augustine. Judicial districts were likewise created for East and West Florida, with Duval and Fromentin, ex-members of Congress, as the judges. There were two district attorneys; and finally the whole territory was divided into three collection districts, having appropriate revenue officers. None of these were Jackson's personal friends, and he complained of them to the President as men he knew nothing about, and whose appointment had been made without consulting him. As for the officials of East Florida, they were so slow in arriving that he received the cession of that province through his military officer in charge, without waiting for them.*

While thus soured in mind against most of the federal

* Monroe MSS., August 4, 1821.

civilians about him excepting Brackenridge, afterwards a judge, whose knowledge of Spanish law made him for this crisis highly serviceable; while poisoned, too, against the Spanish ex-governor, Callava, with whom he had trouble over the inventory of surrender, Jackson found at Pensacola an opportunity of playing the Captain-General. For some reason, not very satisfactory, the documents and archives relating to the property and land grants of West Florida had been kept back at the time of the cession, and it was feared they would be packed and carried away by Callava, contrary to the treaty. A poor woman 1812. September. came to Jackson in September, complaining that papers by which she wished to protect her title against other claimants were in Callava's possession. Quick to sympathize with the distressed and to believe all they told, Jackson sent an officer to the ex-governor to demand the papers. Callava demurred. Castilian that he was, and already at cross-purposes with his successor, he claimed the privileged footing of a Spanish commissioner. Spanish privileges had little sanctity in the American governor's eyes. Jackson promptly ordered the ex-governor into the calaboose, and, once more sending to his house, made seizure of the papers, and then ordered the prisoner discharged.

Fromentin, meantime, the judge of the western district, became involved in this quarrel. Upon application for the prisoner he issued a writ of *habeas corpus*. Deeming this a contempt, Jackson summoned Fromentin before him. At first Fromentin feigned illness as an excuse, but he presently went, to give, as he alleged, a friendly explanation. The interview, as may readily be surmised, was a stormy one, each losing his temper and appealing next to the President. In statements and counter-statements governor and judge bitterly assaulted one another's conduct and motives. Callava, too, who went to Washington to make his own complaint, published a long protest. "Our newly-acquired territory of Florida," observed the *Richmond Enquirer*, "is productive—of documents."

It would seem fair enough to lay the blame for keeping back the archives chiefly upon the Spanish Captain-General of Cuba, whose orders Callava had to obey. But the facts in the case are not clearly disclosed, nor did our governor care to elicit them; for when some of the Spanish residents at Pensacola remonstrated at the accusations made against Callava, Jackson ordered them out of Florida at four days' notice, under pain of arrest. About the same time, under his peremptory orders, the archives in East Florida were also seized, regardless of the protest of Coppinger, the Spanish ex-governor, who had charge of them.*

It strained severely the President's good nature to find his administration embroiled this third time by the indiscreet soldier, who, though honest, patriotic, and jealous for his country's rights, tore every annoyance into an open quarrel, when courtesy, and if possible confidence besides, might have carried affairs with dignity and better success. Jackson's whole mission had been one of ill humor; and in view of his former experience at Pensacola, he never should have been sent back at all unless conquest by arms was the object. Calling his cabinet together, to consider the knotty questions of privilege and implied authority now involved in this triple quarrel, Monroe candidly blamed himself for sending a governor to Florida with powers so ill defined. For several days the subject was dis-

1821. October. cussed without reaching a conclusion; the cabinet officers were much perplexed and divided over the law and justice of the whole matter, as well as its political effect, and Adams was the only one who strongly upheld Jackson.† The press was full of inflammatory talk, and the

* See 21 Niles's Register; 2 Miscell. State Papers, 799; Sumner's Jackson; 2 Parton's Jackson. Parton says that, after all, the heirs of Vidal, who stirred up the trouble which led to Callava's arrest, were found to have an untenable claim. This, however, does not argue the impropriety of having the papers turned over with the cession of the Floridas, but rather the contrary.

† See J. Q. Adams's Diary; 21 Niles's Register. It was admitted on the whole that Fromentin's power as a judge was confined under

President received threatening letters. But later tidings from Florida showed that Callava was only imprisoned a day, and that no bloodshed followed upon Jackson's order of banishment. This made the executive course easier; and to lessen the perplexity, Jackson himself, sick in body and mind, now hastened home to Nashville and tendered his resignation.* All this left the President free to state the whole difficulty mildly in his annual message—for it was nearly time for Congress to assemble—and to conclude by advising a speedy establishment in our new territory of a well organized government, framed on American principles. About the close of the year Jackson's resignation was duly accepted.† November.

The plotting and counter-plotting for the next Presidency gave a hidden but powerful bias to the proceedings of the seventeenth Congress. The two houses assembled in their respective wings of the Capitol on the 3d day of December. The first session lasted until the 8th of the following May. Scarcely had the calling of the House roll shown a quorum present, before a brisk contest arose for the Speakership. John W. Taylor of New York, who had filled Clay's place in the previous Congress most ably and acceptably, though not popular in manners, found three competitors on the first ballot: McLane and the veteran Rodney of Delaware, and Samuel Smith of Maryland. There was no election 1821. Dec. 3. 1822. May 8.

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the tenor of his commission to the revenue and slave-trade laws, and hence that he ought not to have issued a writ of *habeas corpus*. But after all it was an error on the side of liberty, and the inclination of the majority was to treat him as a privileged person who had acted in good faith and was not amenable to Jackson.

* See Monroe MSS.; 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary. Jackson's intentions were intimated to the President early in October. He reached home and resigned about the middle of November.

† Monroe's MSS. There was sympathy felt for Fromentin. But he hurt his own cause by keeping up a controversy which it was better to let die out. He shortly resigned judicial office and returned to practice at the bar of New Orleans. In that city he died in 1822 of yellow fever.

that day; but on Tuesday's balloting Philip P. Barbour of Virginia gradually united the opposition votes, until at the twelfth trial he was chosen Speaker by a bare majority. Taylor's supporters stood firmly by him and even increased his vote; but cabinet influences, together with a division among the middle State Republicans, bore him down. It was really a victory for Crawford, or so at least it turned out; and Calhoun had paved the way to it by indulging a personal spite for which he soon was sorry. *

1821. Dec. 3, 4.

Barbour betrayed at once the partisan temper in making up the House committees. For Smith and McLane he found good positions, but both Taylor and Rodney were passed over; and a new committee on foreign relations was made up, whose chairman, Jonathan Russell, was bitterly at variance with the Secretary of State. Taylor's friends, among them Adams himself, could not hide their chagrin. Rodney, whose family for a century had rarely lost one udder of patronage without gaining another, found consolation; for the legislature of his State speedily elected him to the Senate. In ten days after the House had been organized greater personal dissension appeared than through the whole of the sixteenth Congress; the Crawford faction ruled through a stormy session.†

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* See 21 Niles's Register; 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary; newspapers of the day. Adams, who made a later political alliance with Taylor, explains why the Speakership went over to Barbour. Calhoun took a dislike to Taylor because of the attack made on his department while Taylor presided at the former Congress. The New York "Bucktails" cast their votes against Taylor, because they thought him a Clintonian. Taylor denied the grievances, but admitted that he had undertaken to be neutral between the Clinton and anti-Clinton factions, and that this had placed him in a false position in his State.

This doggerel verse from the National Intelligencer is in point:

"To rule in our Congress a *Taylor* once sought—
He'll *suit* us . . . they all said,
But the Bucktails consider, and so the House thought,
A *Barber* more fit for its *head*."

† 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary. As a fact, Calhoun and Thompson of the cabinet successfully compassed Taylor's defeat, but could not carry in their own candidate. Ib.

The financial prospect of the country was brightening. Business rested upon a more durable basis than at any time since the days of the embargo. The lowest point of depression had been reached about the close of 1820. But now was the time when government felt that depression most sensibly in a diminished revenue; and what with the lessened values of imported goods and the melting down of an immense capital of artificial credit, the receipts from customs, now almost the only source of public supply, showed, when Congress met, another deficiency, though a slight one. The $5,000,000 loan, already authorized,* had been raised at an average premium which increased the actual debt over $1,000,000. Expedients were suggested but not tried. The problem solved itself in another twelve months; and when this same Congress reassembled at the close of 1822, an unexpected reduction of the debt was announced. Revenue had risen again with the public prosperity, and from that day forward Monroe found the annual revenue equal and more than equal to all current demands upon it.†

The people in most of the States were now cured of the paper money delusion. In Kentucky alone was the delirium of discredit prolonged for many years to come. Here a violent effort was made to sweep State judges from the bench who had upheld the obligation of contracts, and "old court" and "new court" parties long contended. A State bank was chartered whose bills, boastfully styled a "legal tender," passed in exchange with specie-paying banks at scarcely fifty cents on the dollar. But while this State kept shaken to the centre, its debtor majority arrayed hopelessly against the national sentiment, Ohio bent to the tempest and then cleared away the wrecks. 1821-22.

Returning to a sounder currency and sounder principles

* *Supra*, p. 190.

† See 5th, 6th, and 7th annual messages of Monroe; also 21 Niles's Register; 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary.

of finance, Ohio relaxed, too, its senseless warfare upon the United States Bank. Its legislature had appealed to those of sister States, hoping for sympathy with the effort made to tax the institution out of the State limits. That hope was disappointed. Few legislatures responded at all. Those in New England one by one announced confidence in the decision of the Supreme Court and rebuked the Ohio officials who had attempted to levy a tax in defiance of its mandate. A retreat was sounded. As though by a friendly arrangement for carrying up the circuit case on appeal, the money seized at the vaults of the branch bank was restored and the State was enjoined from collecting any further tax.* Every other attempt to cripple the United States Bank by litigating its rights was equally a failure.†

1821-22.

Meantime the national bank itself, under good management, repaired its losses and reputation. By January, 1821, this institution had regained its capital; by July of the same year dividends were resumed; and when in October, 1822, Cheves made a last statement to the stockholders, it was found that the ample powers and prestige of the bank were fully restored. This useful citizen now retired from active affairs, though serving as a commissioner under the British convention, and Nicholas Biddle was chosen his successor.‡ Mutterings against the bank were still heard, for in and out of Congress it had made many enemies; but its business prospered. Most of the stock formerly held in Baltimore and the south had by this time passed into the hands of men identified with New York and Massachusetts; but Pennsylvania shareholders stood on the books about the same as before.§

No theme for public agitation in this era of our history seems to have swelled and died away with the ebb and

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* *Supra*, p. 119.

† See cases 8 Wheat., 338; 9 Pet., 378; *supra*, p. 120.

‡ 23 Niles's Register, and other newspapers of the day.

§ 21 Niles's Register.

flow of the national Treasury like that of internal improvements; and by internal improvements, as a political issue and part of Clay's "American system," the reader is simply to understand public works, such as roads and canals, paid for, if not wholly executed, under authority of Congress; States in this instance being developed by the general government, instead of providing for their own development. Like an organ whose keyboard emits no sound until air is forced into the pipes, nothing was heard of this policy while the revenues were exhausted; but now, when the national debt decreased and confidence revived, the diapason swelled into a loud acclaim for great national works, to be prosecuted at the cost of the whole Union.

We have seen that Jefferson, in 1807, when anticipating an annual surplus, projected vast schemes of national improvement, which vanished with the approach of our second war; * and that, quickly after that war was over, effort was made in Congress, though in vain, to create a national fund for such purposes.† During the first year of Monroe's incumbency, when the rainbow of the surplus seemed once more to stand on solid earth, Monroe found it necessary to consider what should be his own policy on a question which was fast resolving itself into a national issue. Not without first consulting Madison,‡ he then determined to plant himself upon Jeffersonian ground: namely, to favor all such works, but at the same time require a fuller sanction than the existing constitution afforded; for, as George Clinton had once said, and it was the wisest remark he ever uttered, though not perhaps so wisely applied, "Government is not to be strengthened by the assumption of doubtful powers, but by a wise and energetic execution of those which are incontestable."§ Accordingly, in his first annual message

1815.

1817.

* Vol. ii, p. 132.

† Ib., p. 451.

‡ See Monroe MSS.

§ See 16 Niles's Register, 146. This was when, as Vice-President, he gave a casting vote in the Senate against reviving the United States Bank.

Monroe advised that Congress should recommend to the States a constitutional amendment, empowering that body to establish systems of internal improvement. "Disregarding early impressions," he observed, "I have bestowed on the subject all the deliberation which its great importance and a just sense of my duty required, and the result is a settled conviction in my mind that Congress does not possess the right."*

An effort was made in the Senate pursuant to this advice. But they who pressed most earnestly this policy of internal improvement sought a shorter way to the treasury. In the course of a House discussion, which lasted several days, three resolutions, which asserted that Congress had already the right to construct post and military roads, canals for military purposes, and roads and canals necessary for commerce between the States, were severally lost;† and this branch of Congress virtually refused to appropriate or pledge any national fund for internal improvements. But a practical distinction was taken between the right to originate by national authority and the right simply to appropriate in aid of State construction; and the Secretaries of War and the Treasury were further instructed to report at the next session what necessary roads and canals were in progress, together with a plan for aiding them by appropriations.‡ The next session discovered an empty treasury; and though the list called for was laid on the table of the House, nothing was actually appropriated by the fifteenth Congress for works of this description beyond the extension of the Cumberland Road to the Ohio river at the cost of half a million dollars or more; and this was strictly chargeable upon the special fund reserved for roads to new States.§

1817-18.

1818. March.

1818-19.

This Cumberland Road, soon coming to be known as the

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* Annual Message, Dec. 2, 1817.

† See Annals of Congress.

‡ Ib., 1817–18.

§ Ib., 1818; 3 U. S. Stats. at Large, 426, 500.

"National Road," has a monumental importance in history. On its lengthening line was fought out one of the severest political issues of the next twenty years, the national forces being arrayed under leaders like Clay and Adams on the one side, and Jackson on the other. Perishable are the works of man, like the fame of erecting them, when the age grows lighter instead of darkening. Pilgrims no longer stop by the wayside, as they once did, to view the monument of stone, surmounted by the genius of liberty, which bore the inscription, "Henry Clay." To carry the construction of this road, once a famous thoroughfare, from the little Maryland town of Cumberland to the Ohio, and across the Ohio through the great northwest, and perhaps in time to the Pacific ocean, was one of the grandest projects of his creative mind.* This road was projected in the halcyon days of 1807, and, once begun, it was found of such singular utility for western traffic that Congress appropriated from time to time for the work, without drawing attention to the importance of the precedent thus established.†

Before the extension of the National Road to Wheeling,‡ the immense merchandise traffic with our western country had gone mainly by way of Philadelphia or Baltimore to Pittsburg, whence the descent of the Ohio commenced. By that route, too, the pioneer or traveller pursued his long journey by stage, wagon, horseback, or on foot, as his means permitted. But the old Pittsburg road, which extended for three hundred miles through one of the richest States of the Union, was sadly neglected; the mountain steeps and precipices were dangerous and difficult, and in many places the ponderous and heavily laden wagons had worn the soil from the rocks or else softened it into a quagmire. Through ravines, gullies, and yawning gulfs one's journey was slow and often perilous. Freight charges varied

* Vol. ii, p. 132.

† See Monroe MSS.; Madison's letter of Dec. 27, 1817; Madison's Writings, 1817.

‡ That "little town at the foot of the hill," as jealous Pittsburg styled it.

greatly at different seasons of the year. In vain did western settlers and travellers, who had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars along the route in Pennsylvania, remonstrate, so long as this route feared no competitor; for from Chambersburg westward the road passed through an unpopulous and sterile section, and dwellers in those thinly settled regions of the State wholly remote from this great thoroughfare took little interest in contributing to keep it in repair. All this made the western appeal to Congress irresistible; and hence the appropriation in 1819 for the extension of the Cumberland Road to the Ohio, which made the Union itself a bidder against New York and Pennsylvania for the overland trade and travel. Cumberland was the town where Braddock assembled his army in 1755 for the campaign whose tragedy first discovered a Washington, his Indian guide tracing a path through the Alleghanies by nearly the same route as the present. A noble turnpike was this National Road between Cumberland and Wheeling. Its average width was eighty feet, and markers were placed at each quarter of a mile. It was paved with durable stone and covered with gravel, so as to give it solidity and smoothness. Strong arches spanned the dizzy ravine, below which might be seen the frothing stream leaping in solitary rage from rock to rock. Precipitous mountain sides were hewn in places, that the heavily laden wagon might groove its way in perfect safety. Foremost in the long van was seen the car of a conquering civilization which spared not toil nor treasure to subdue nature to its purpose.*

The spirit of improvement was now fully aroused to lessen the ancient impediments of time and space. Wheeling had its golden dreams; the friends of unceasing development looked for unceasing appropriations. From Cumberland to Wheeling and the river; across the river to Zanesville, Ohio; from Zanesville, through the great northwestern States, to the shore of the Mississippi; still westward and whither-

* See James Hall's Travels (1820).

soever the white man's face should seek the setting sun;—this was the programme of a political faction which Clay imbued with his own enthusiasm. Already, by an act of 1820, commissioners were to examine the country between Wheeling and the left bank of the Mississippi and lay out an extension.*

Was it strange, then, that with the country emerging from gloom, and every State, every community, interested in some material project too vast to be borne alone, the seventeenth Congress, its leaders all bidding for popularity, should engage deeply in the log-rolling of interests whose common aim was to shift the burden of cost to the nation's broad shoulders? The near completion of the great Erie canal aroused a spirit of emulation so boundless that every leading legislature in the Union was now absorbed in schemes for joining rivers, bringing lakes by zigzag water-courses to the sea, and cutting through isthmuses; and the magnificent turnpike proposed from Wheeling to St. Louis had its southern counterpart in a road planned from Washington to New Orleans. Such works, it was argued, were for the national benefit; and consequently in the canvass for the Presidency, already a feverish one, candidates and their friends vied with one another for this kind of beneficence. Nothing seemed so popular as to favor a liberal expenditure from the Treasury upon these objects of local solicitude; and yet if one State or section was to be built up at the general cost, so must another. Instead of the vast and permanent system promised for the benefit of the whole Union, all was likely to end in an amalgamation of jobs and a general scramble for the public backsheesh, in which the beggars of doubtful politics were likely to get the most. Congress, never systematic, whether in almsgiving or calculations for the far future, would sink the national credit in the mire of enterprises which States or individuals could manage a hundred times better.

It was high time, so Monroe thought, to recall our people

* Act May 15, 1820.

and their representatives to the landmarks of the constitution. A bill for repairing the Cumberland Road was introduced at the first session of the present Congress. It appropriated a trifling sum to be sure, only $9,000, for that purpose; but it authorized, besides, the erection of toll gates and the collection of tolls for keeping the road in repair. Much as the West favored this road, it was plain from the tenor of recent debate that Pennsylvania was jealous. The bill passed the House, the Senate concurred; but Monroe returned it with his veto and the bill was lost.*

1822. April-May.

This veto message, concisely expressed, objected to the bill on the ground that Congress had no power under the constitution to establish turnpikes with gates and tolls, nor, in general, to adopt and execute a system of internal improvement. A State paper accompanied it which discussed at great length the President's views upon the whole subject; being the same document, in substance, which he had thought of submitting to Congress in 1819, but held back at the request of his cabinet. Three of that cabinet, Adams, Calhoun, and Crawford, and the two former especially, took the popular side of this question. He chose, therefore, to send in the message without the usual conference and upon his sole responsibility.†

Nothing better illustrates the patient and conscientious study which this most painstaking of magistrates bestowed upon the great concerns of his administration than this profound and elaborate opinion upon the general question

* See Annals of Congress; 22 Niles's Register. The bill originally passed the House April 29, 87 to 68. The vote May 6, upon passing it notwithstanding the President's objections, stood 68 to 72; a two-thirds vote being required, and a majority actually sustaining the vote.

† See Monroe MSS.; J. Q. Adams's Diary.

The difficulty of transporting men and supplies during the war of 1812 had been a strong reason for improving the roads upon our lake and Mississippi frontiers. Calhoun as Secretary of War put soldiers to work upon these military roads, and in his reports urged the government to enter upon the construction of roads and canals upon a liberal scale. This accorded with his earlier advice in Congress. See vol. ii, p. 451.

of internal improvements. It states fairly the whole argument for and against the constitutional right, though concluding adversely to its advocates, and re-affirming the ground taken in his first annual message. Beginning with a historical inquiry into the sources of federal power, he discusses at length the clauses which the advocates of the system in question rely upon; first, however, dwelling upon the varieties of jurisdiction needful for building roads and canals, and showing the collisions likely to occur between the State and federal authority, from first to last; as for instance, in acquiring land and rights of way, punishing trespassers, enforcing the tolls, preserving bridges, walls, gates, canals, and locks from injury.* This important State paper, together with the veto itself, interposed a breakwater to the popular policy of the day. Another administration tried to sweep round such a precedent and perished in the effort. It took nearly ten years for Monroe's argument to convert public opinion, but it did so at last. Perhaps the change would have come earlier had not Monroe yielded something to the passion of the day. He expressed himself as in favor of a system of internal improvement so far as the constitution had already conferred the necessary powers, or might annex them by amendment hereafter. He yielded, too to the opinion of the House in 1818, that Congress might appropriate in aid of internal improvements, though not so as to take actual jurisdiction of the enterprise. Relying on such a distinction he approved somewhat later a bill in aid of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company;† so, too, did he consent to a simple appropriation for repairing the

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* President's message, May 4, 1822. The clauses of the federal constitution under which liberal constructionists claimed the right of internal improvement under national auspices were these: (1) The right to establish post offices and post roads. (2) The right to declare war. (3) The right to regulate commerce among the States. (4) The power to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare. (5) The power to carry into effect all enumerated powers. (6) The power to regulate the territory and property of the United States.

† Act March 3, 1825.

Cumberland Road.* The improvement of navigable rivers and harbors depended upon clauses of the constitution of altogether a different bearing, those namely which relate to commerce and the revenue.† Monroe's cabinet and the friends of the Presidential candidates still claimed him, therefore, as a friend of the national policy so popular. Monroe was proud of the veto, confident of the ground he had chosen; but it was too early yet, so he seems to have thought, to point the batteries.‡

An important step was taken, about the time of this veto, with respect to Spanish American affairs. Early in the course of the session came grand news from the southern patriots. Bolivar, the liberator and citizen, dealt a death blow to the imperial army. The provinces of Venezuela and New Grenada, united since 1819 with their three million inhabitants under the title of the "Republic of Colombia," maintained a government well organized. The small remnant of the Spanish army was here blockaded in two fortresses and about to surrender. Buenos Ayres and Chili had long enjoyed their civil freedom unmolested; and after Lima capitulated in June, 1821, to the patriot army of these States, Peru, too, was united in fortune with the friends of liberty. In Mexico the situation was peculiar; but an em-

* Act Feb. 28, 1823. This, of course, was an anomalous instance. All that could be said was that, constitutional or not, the road had been built; and if built it ought not to be suffered, as government property, to go to ruin.

† See Act May 24, 1824.

‡ See Monroe MSS. Monroe sent out copies of his veto message to the judges of the Supreme Court and to most of his political friends. He received in response many testimonials of approval; from Wirt, Rush, Madison, Southard, and others. Madison approved, but excepted to the latitude which he allowed to the power of appropriating money. Judge Johnson of the Supreme Court intimated that the bank decision in the opinion of his brethren committed that tribunal to internal improvements as applied to post roads and military roads; but that on the other points his reasoning carried conviction. Story was non-committal. "It is a subject," responds the Chief Justice, "on which many divide in opinion; but all will admit that your views are profound and that you have thought much on the subject."

pire was established in August, 1821, independent in fact of Spain, and likely to remain so.

A special message from the President recommended an appropriation for establishing foreign intercourse with these now independent nations. This meant recognition; and so eager was Congress to pronounce the word which for four years had been leaping to its lips, that a resolution reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations in harmony with Monroe's message passed the House by 159 to 1. Even absent members asked leave, the day after, to have their votes recorded; and Garnett of Virginia, the solitary objector, had his reasons spread on the journal, in order that his motives might be vindicated. A bill appropriating for missions to these governments at the President's discretion passed both houses readily and became a law.* Thus did our government, in spite of cautious delays and the baffling arts of an enemy, occupy its chosen place in the vanguard of liberty. The United States was the first of civilized powers to welcome the new republics of this continent into the family of nations. Europe was silent much longer. Even Great Britain dallied; though the British press applauded our action heartily, and, as Canning admitted to Rush, it was impossible that Spain could ever recover her authority over those revolted provinces.†

1822. March.

March 28, 29.

These two acts of Executive origin, the veto of internal improvements and recognition of the Spanish American republics, stand like two palm trees in an arid waste of legislation. There is nothing else in all the annals of the seventeenth Congress which the eye can rest upon with satisfaction or even interest. Of the first session, which lasted nominally until

1821. Dec. 3.

1822. May 8.

* Act May 4, 1822; Annals of Congress. And see President's special message, March 8, 1822; report of House Committee; 22 Niles's Register. Monroe had so much wished a unanimous recognition of the Spanish-American republics that he wrote to ask whether Garnett would not review his decision, but Garnett declined to change his vote. Monroe MSS.

† Monroe MSS.; Rush's letter, Oct. 20, 1822.

May 8, the main business was forced through the two Houses within two weeks of the final adjournment.* A bankrupt bill was discussed and rejected. Tariff measures waited for a House apportioned under the new census. The apportionment act itself passed so tardily that in some States the legislature had to hold an extra session in order to re-arrange the districts in season for the elections. A territorial government was created for Florida, by an act defective and in less than a year remodelled.† There were relief acts, Indian acts, appropriation and other acts of the ordinary business range. Of the second and short session the general tenor of legislation was the same. There were acts to suppress piracy, acts for executing treaty stipulations and punishing frauds upon the government.‡ But the general scope of legislation was narrow and its motives contemptible.

1822. Dec. 2. 1823. March 3.

In truth, this seventeenth Congress was an intriguing, meddlesome, undermining one, devoted to personal interests in place of principle, and coquetting between the several rivals for the next Presidency, like the confidante of some absent heiress, courted as proxy, who takes the chief homage to herself. Among so many competitors it was already likely that the next Congress, potent in its caucus, would be more potent still should the electors fail to choose a President, so as to devolve a selection upon the House. But as that House would present new elements, the present agitation seemed quite premature. Crawford, however, was of another opinion. This was his Congress, and for a time his faction ramped like a band of gladiators, butchering every reputation which stood in his way. This stirred the friends of the other candidates, and hence a bitter

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* See Annals of Congress; U. S. Statutes at Large; 22 Niles's Register. Out of 129 acts of this session only 30 were of earlier date than April 26. Niles says that at the very last both Houses sat one Saturday until nearly midnight, and passed between 70 and 80 bills.

† See Acts March 30, 1822; March 3, 1823.

‡ See U. S. Statutes at Large, Acts of 17th Congress.

struggle of factions, every man's hand against his brother. There was the Crawford cabal on the one hand, renewing its assaults upon the War Department, and accusing Calhoun of wasting public money upon favorite contractors. There was the Calhoun cabal on the other, weaker in numbers but persevering, which charged Crawford with spreading his influence by means of appointments, and sending a senator over the west to electioneer for him at the government cost, on the pretence of engaging him to inspect the land offices. Presses, employed eagerly in the task of indecently puffing up or writing down, sharpened the tale of scandal, to which legislators and the politicians listened. Congress surrendered its time accordingly to petty investigations. It fussed over the public expenditures, preached little economies, and brandished the knife of retrenchment with neither the courage nor skill to apply it. Committees instituted inquiries, ran the eye up and down accounts, pointed out little items, snuffed about dark corners, peeped behind curtains and under beds, and explored every cupboard of the Executive household with a mousing alacrity; not so eager, it would appear, to correct abuses as to collect campaign materials for damaging some candidate, and playing the detective in preference to the judge. Inquisition was made of departments and their management, of clerks and their salaries, of office hours. It was proposed to reduce the navy, and again to give the army establishment and coast defence another cut; but the ardor for economy evaporated in talk.

To be sure, there was some discontent with the Executive when Congress first assembled as a basis for all this busy nothingness. The increase of expenditure was unwelcome, and, most of all, the continuous borrowing of money in times of peace. Public defaulters had not been pushed, perhaps, as vigorously as they should have been, but the suggestion of the fault insured the remedy. The real evil lay in partisans of the several candidates who persisted in making a handle of all these things to help or hurt. Not even the emptiness of the treasury when Con-

gress first met would Crawford's friends permit to discredit a Secretary who could devise no means of replenishing save to borrow; but their recourse was to economies in other directions, to any kind of retrenchment, in short, which would not bear heavily upon him or them.

If this Congress was unfruitful in business, it was equally barren in debate. Niles, a faithful chronicler of the times and a man of common sense, speaks contemptuously of its "quirking, spouting majority." * The Senate, certainly a respectable body, containing not less than seven members who had been governors of States,† lost, for those days the foremost, the first of its orators in the illustrious Pinkney, who sank exhausted under the double pressure of his duties as advocate and legislator. His death, midway in the first session, cast a pall over its deliberations. In the House men of inferior merit consumed the time. Clay's leadership was missed; a cipher described the new Speaker's value as a purely relative one; the gentle Lowndes, whose personal influence had so long been felt in this body, failed in health, resigned, and died at sea, while his South Carolina friends were announcing him a candidate for President. Strange voices awoke the confused echoes to little purpose. Even Randolph, who could always interest the gallery, made himself conspicuous only for a strange obituary zeal,‡ and then departed suddenly for Europe. In such a House vituperation itself was dull and calumny had no sparkle.

Under a political system like ours the legislature tends constantly to encroach upon the other departments of government. But a President, having the patronage at command and the power to manage details, those particularly

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* 22 Niles's Register.

† Ib.

‡ Randolph's "tricksy humors" in the Decatur obsequies have been noticed, *supra*, p. 219. In February, 1822, he announced Pinkney's death prematurely, and caused the House to adjourn over while that distinguished Senator was still alive. The next day he explained his error, and Pinkney having now breathed his last, a new adjournment was carried. See 22 Niles's Register.

of foreign relations, combining singleness of purpose, moreover, with the opportunity, from his superior insight and acquaintance with facts, to frame, propose, and impress a policy of his own, may exert a vast influence over Congress so long as he can keep a working majority of both Houses well in hand. That influence, as concerned the present Executive, who hitherto had held his own with Congress, seemed suddenly to have vanished. Now re-elected, it might be thought that he had left that branch to itself. His advisers were quarrelling, and he himself, in the midst of the angry flutter, had flown to the perch of lofty but isolated independence. His two choice messages were each an Executive surprise, which left Congress to its own conclusion. In a word, Monroe had put himself out of the pale of the impending canvass thus early by a declaration of neutrality. His word of honor not to interfere as among the candidates, three of whom were his cabinet advisers, was felt to be sacred; and in consequence, though his new term had scarcely yet commenced, he ceased to be the centre of hopes and expectation. The conflict promised to be a personal one, without visible lines of party distinction. Monroe chose well from his own point of view, but a craftier leader would have held out lures and kept the rival interests more closely attached to his person; and better would it have been for Monroe's own peace of mind, as well as his authority, though not for his honor, had he deferred longer his announcement, or even confined his neutrality, as he might have done, to the two or three candidates most deserving of the succession. But in this, as in other points of behavior, Washington rather than Jefferson supplied the model; and to have carried out such a policy well would have required most exquisite tact.

To Madison, his friend and counsellor, Monroe disclosed the present perplexities of his mind, as well as his views upon the existing situation. Never, he wrote, had he found such embarrassment as with the present Congress. Where there is an open contest with a foreign enemy or an internal party, in which one is supported by first princi-

ples, the course is plain, and something presents itself to cheer and animate to action. But we are blessed now with peace. There is no division to rally the people under to support the administration; and with a Presidential election approaching and preparations making, it is unfortunate that there should be three strong candidates under one administration, each of whose friends attacks and thwarts the others.* Commenting further upon the general peace which prevailed, the entire absence of all cause for political excitement and the genuine prosperity of the Union which marked this new epoch in our political career, one, he said would naturally look in such a stage for a tranquil movement, marked by a common effort to promote the public good. "It is my firm belief," he added, "that this will be the result after a short time. This disturbed state of things, like the rolling of the waves after a storm, though worse than the storm itself, will subside and leave the ship in perfect security. Public opinion will react on Congress and keep it right. Surely our government may get on and prosper without the existence of parties. I have always considered their existence as the curse of the country, of which we had sufficient proof, more especially in the late war. How keep them alive and in action? The same causes which exist in other countries do not here. We have no distinct orders." †

Nothing in the whole drift of the first session had annoyed the President so much as the obstructions offered to his military policy. Partly to spite Calhoun, but with a covert attack upon Monroe himself and the well matured policy Congress had adopted in 1815–16, Crawford's partisans, on a pretence of economy, tried to break up the general plan of coast defence, cutting the work up in parts and reducing the whole system.‡ They annoyed him still more by blocking the measures he had taken for re-

* Monroe MSS., May 10, 1822.

† Ib.

‡ Ib.; and see special message of March 26, 1822, which shows how deeply sensitive Monroe was on this point.

ducing the army to the standard of 1821. He had appointed a board of general officers to fill vacancies, giving them the law and precedents; they made their report, which he confirmed without change. The Senate rejected two military nominations of great importance made in conformity to that report. Monroe withdrew the nominations not acted upon to explain his construction, and renominating with the two who had been rejected, he found these two again rejected. The reduction of the army gave naturally great discontent; but the President had tried to be strictly impartial in making it. The army, like the navy, being now well organized and its expenses reduced to the minimum, he felt that his official discretion on delicate points of military rank deserved a better confidence.*

When these appointments were first rejected the President thought of sending his message to both Houses of Congress, but, following the advice of his cabinet, he decided to confine it to the Senate. According to Adams, this was the first time Crawford ever came out openly and explicitly against the President in cabinet meeting; he upheld what the Senate had done and intimated very plainly that the proposed message would be deemed an interference and could do the President no good. Monroe was very sensitive over these comments and overruled Crawford with emphasis; making a remark which was understood to mean that the motive of this opposition in the Senate he well knew was to help Crawford by embarrassing the administration.† In fact, Crawford seems to have tested Monroe in 1821 long enough to find that he would bear no part, for or against him, in the next campaign, and then to have taken his former cue, of belittling the administration for his personal advantage. Or perhaps he thought, by a display of his strength, to bend the President to his own views and give outside the impression of his ascendency in the patronage and policy. When, soon after, the

1822. April.

* Monroe MSS., May 10, 1822; ib., Aug., 1822.

† See 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary, April, 1822.

President appointed not the Crawford candidate, but another, to be governor of Florida, Crawford's friends were in great rage. "They have all written me letters about it," said Monroe to Adams, "and I consider myself personally insulted by them." *

Whether Crawford and Monroe had stormy scenes in private, before or after this interview, is not clearly known. Each preserved great reticence on such points. But Crawford, envious of his chief, felt, perhaps, chagrined that Monroe would not prefer him for the succession above all others. Little enough had he deserved such a preference as he twisted his way up the pillar of promotion. Adams, who recorded his trail with the minuteness of a scientist, pronounces Crawford treacherous to the core, having the desperate energy of a Lucifer. To Jackson he appeared a base ingrate. But these were rivals. The worst testimony against Crawford is that of the man to whose forbearance he owed most. Monroe, who in mature life rarely made personal criticism and never an unjust one, recognized the honor and affection of all others in his cabinet. Their rivalries with one another never marred the harmony of their intercourse with him. Upon Crawford alone of them all has he left adverse comments, and the very temperance of those comments makes the reproach the stronger. Adams, Calhoun, and Wirt could all respond to generous sentiments, and of their tender respect for Monroe proofs are not wanting. But Crawford was cold and selfish by nature. Men of colossal build, self-made, who have pushed their way upward, present often a nature streaked with coarseness and brute instincts which stifle the finer feelings. Crawford aimed at the leonine; he entranced by his democratic simplicity. But in affecting to despise the frippery and nonsense of polite society, he set too little store by those maxims of good feeling upon which polite society is regulated.

Confidential friends of Monroe advised him at this junc-

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* 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary, April, 1822. See also Monroe MSS.; 2 Gallatin's Works.

ture to get Crawford out of the cabinet; either, they said, he is unable to restrain his friends, or else for the last two years he has encouraged them to oppose you.* Monroe cogitated this advice; he drew up one draft and another in private with scrupulous care, neither of them dated nor addressed. Cabinet discipline was the purport of the letter, and, had he sent it, a cabinet rupture would most likely have followed. Monroe meditated, and well he may have done so, for it was a painful step to take, and sure to expose him to the slander that he had basely broken his promise of neutrality.† While he thus deliberated, Crawford himself broached the subject. At first satirical, and even defiant, when speculating upon the chances of his displacement,‡ a rumor from without that Monroe intended actually to dispense with his services brought him, it would appear, to a different frame of mind. An explanation ensued, the result of which was that the President asked Crawford to remain, and he did so.§

None of the rivals spurned in these days by Crawford turned upon him so fiercely as the youthful Calhoun. A pigmy candidate in the eyes of that Goliath, he showed himself a very David with the sling. Georgia affairs had been running adversely of late, and the re-election of a personal enemy of Crawford's in 1821, as Governor, made it for the moment doubtful whether Crawford could carry

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* See Monroe MSS., May, June, 1822.

† Monroe MSS. These drafts are most naturally to be referred to the summer of 1822. Monroe's papers make no comment of any kind upon them, and no response is to be found; and it is observable that while other drafts Monroe preserved are invariably dated and addressed, by indorsement or otherwise, these are left incomplete in both particulars. These drafts seem to import, not a reply to Crawford, but the intention of opening the subject on the President's own side.

‡ See 2 Gallatin's Works, Crawford to Gallatin, May, 1822. The temper of this letter is unaccommodating upon the differences which had arisen. It does not deny that Crawford had helped defeat the President's nominations, but intimates rather the reverse. In various ways it indicates the writer's chagrin at not having his own way with the President and securing the succession clear of rivalry.

§ 6 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1822. This speaks of the correspondence in question, and is perhaps the only source of information preserved.

the electoral vote of his own State. Calhoun seems to have thought this a sign that the South must have a new candidate. The Presidential fever seized him violently, though he had just been balancing between Adams and Crawford, and giving each to understand that his ambition could afford to wait. He threw himself upon Pennsylvania, where he had friends who at once set him up as the young men's candidate. The Lowndes nomination by the South Carolina legislature was due, most probably, to a like interpretation of events in Georgia. The delusion passed; for by 1822 it was clear that Crawford held his own State; but Calhoun's precipitancy exposed him to more ribaldry than he could bear. The Crawford presses had long defamed his department; he now paid the score by setting up a press of his own at the capital. This newspaper, called the *Washington Republican*, a bright little sheet, opened a brisk fire upon the Treasury Department, and to the speedy discomfiture of Crawford's friends.*

Calhoun was yet a young man, only forty years of age, and though bony and slender, far different in personal aspect from that rigid, scornful, and bloodless being, who in later life held his State and section spell-bound by a mysterious but malignant influence. He was one of those dreamy-looking men whose presence haunts the imagination like a verse of poetry. With a face both thoughtful and handsome, flashing brown eyes full of penetration, dark hair waving carelessly over his high broad forehead, an intellect which stimulated, and most engaging manners, he was fascinating to the last degree, and after a method quite his own. His views were original and confidently expressed. Timidity and doubt seemed no part of his nature. Adams and Jackson, both much older men and in some respects as unlike one another as the poles, felt the charm of his intercourse; yet, not without profound distrust of his sincerity upon a closer acquaintance. Monroe, however, loved him,

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary, July-September, 1822; National Intelligencer; Niles's Register.

and one may believe him to have been of a lovable and responsive nature until corroded and consumed by ambition. Younger men than himself, those especially who were likely to rise to influence, he held by delicate flattery and instilled into their minds his political precepts. But his philosophy exacted from the pupil a state of mind open somewhat to magic and delusion; for he himself led by a chain of logic whose end and beginning he had neither the patience nor the love of truth, for truth's own sake, to search out. His intellect, which was intense and ingenious, delighted in novelties, bold contrasts, and startling conclusions; but like one who carries a torch through a cavern he took his way heedless of dimensions or structure. He had been trained in youth too quickly, and was launched into public life before mastering a profession. The drudgery of investigation he disliked; but trusted to intuition, to the lightning-glance. Hence in Calhoun as a statesman great talents and great faults grew up together. He has been considered pure, upright, faithful to his convictions. He was, most unquestionably, a bold and independent thinker; and as for morals, had been brought up under strict Presbyterian influences, to which were superadded those of Yale College where he took his degree. But his convictions were formed upon such quicksands, he was so little disposed to search things to the bottom, that ambition soon became an infatuation, burning out Calhoun's better part, though by a slow process. When the fever went down it left his nature passionless, destructive, deadly, mischievous. Now that it began, something noble and national could be discovered in his ambition; yet he showed himself lax, wayward, inclined to get upon the winning side, and above all to win for himself. Adams, who never in the world did Calhoun an injury, found him, with the professions of friendship yet moist upon his lips, just as ready, while thus fired, to assail him before the public as ever he had done Crawford.*

The basest and most envenomed assault upon Adams,

* J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1822.

that which stirred him most deeply, came, however, from another quarter. His fellow-citizen, Jonathan Russell, of the House and the foreign relations committee, one who had taken part in the negotiations at Ghent, brought up those negotiations while Congress was in session to injure the northern candidate with western men. He falsified a letter to make it appear that Adams would have sacrificed American rights in the Mississippi for the sake of procuring the treaty. Adams hurled back the slander with such spirit and force of proof as to establish himself more firmly with the people, and make himself for the first time a really formidable candidate. The charge recoiled upon the author with terrible effect, for Russell disappeared from public life. Abroad and at home he had been much under Clay's influence, and to help Clay's canvass was like enough his design.* With a dogged but sincere and honorable ambition Adams pushed on, turning neither to the right nor the left, and, though a good enough hater at heart, fighting only when attacked, and then fighting to good purpose.

But there were now indications that the people were looking beyond this stifling atmosphere for direction. Utterly out of harmony with the temperament of the times appeared the fratricidal war of self-styled candidates. The opportunity was ripe for a "people's choice;" for some plain, blunt, deserving citizen to be brought forward, who was neither statesman nor politician, but an honest man, a lover of his country, and one on whom the country might confer its own reward. The Union prospered; the people moved harmoniously; and the ignominious strifes of this Congress were humiliating to the last degree.

Jackson had returned home from Florida, wearied and

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1822, for the curious story at length, and the falsification of Russell's alleged copy of his letter written in 1815, by the production of the original from Monroe's private papers. Some said that Clay aimed the Parthian arrow at Adams, so unluckily shot; but of this there is no proof, though Clay published a nonchalant letter, as though to correct Adams. Clay's Private Correspondence, 1823.

broken down. Fifty-five years of age already, why might not such a man give popularity to a ticket, and enjoy his declining years in the irresponsible place of Vice-President? Such was Adams's thought, and no one had a better right than he to ask such an associate, for he had been Jackson's constant defender. A vain thought, notwithstanding; for though Jackson would fain have believed himself at the moment an old man, strength of will mastered the feeble body for fifteen good years longer, and, strong or weak, he could not play the subordinate again to any man living.* A fierce wrath seized him after sending in his resignation, when he saw that his conduct in Florida was traversed in Congress, and that some said he had resigned to escape impeachment. He wrote defiantly to the Speaker of the House; he recalled the resignation; and chagrined enough was he to find that it had been already accepted. Still more was he irritated by the reserved tone of the President's message on the subject of his latest imbroglio. He remonstrated with Monroe in a private letter, which seemed to lay it down that a friend must under all circumstances be a partisan. "I have adopted as a rule through life," he wrote bitterly, "never to abandon my friend, unless he first abandons me." †

Monroe's response was full of feeling. "I am much hurt," he said, "that you should complain that I have not done you justice. I am incapable of injustice to any man. Had your defence been my sole object, I could not have taken a better course; but that was not my sole object." And he proceeded to explain his own embarrassments with a Congress whose occupation had been pulling down characters instead of sustaining them. "This," he adds, "I tell you in confidence, for it becomes me more to hold up Congress and put the best face on our affairs." ‡

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* See his letter, Nov. 14, 1821, Monroe MSS., where Jackson, weary of public life, speaks of attending to his private concerns, "to support me in my declining years."

† Monroe MSS.

‡ Ib., Jan.–May, 1822.

Jackson soon gained in health and felt reconciled to his old friend. At this time he lived in retirement at the "Hermitage," where he owned an excellent brick house, papered and painted in good style, and furnished very comfortably, and a cotton plantation besides of about 130 acres which were cultivated by 30 hands. He raised oats, vegetables, and other supplies sufficient for his household wants, and dressed his slaves in homespun clothing. With his wife, a pious and benevolent old lady, of whom he was very fond, though they were married under somewhat peculiar circumstances, he entertained strangers most hospitably. They had no children of their own, but the general had an adopted son. The habits and mode of life in this neighborhood were simple and rustic; and the learning of books was unfamiliar. Could it be possible that in this house lodged "the people's candidate?" Never before, for President or Vice-President, had so rude a stratum of society been sought or a man with so little of a civilian's training. But Jackson had devoted friends about him who had long been determined to bring him forward. Foremost among these was Major William B. Lewis of Nashville, a skilful man with the pen, who possessed an ample fortune, and was modest and unaspiring, though in some respects a remarkable manager and far-sighted politican. A Nashville paper set forth Jackson's claims upon the people early in 1822; other presses in Pennsylvania followed. The idea once started seemed to take hold of men's minds and elicit a curious interest. Congress bore gently upon his recent shortcomings in Florida, repealing to be sure some of his oppressive ordinances,* but, on the whole, dismissing the question of his conduct with a few scattering criticisms. The issue of the Seminole debate was not yet forgotten.† While this conclusion was pending Jackson began to receive anonymous letters predicting, with all the flattery which he so

1822.

* Act May 7, 1822.
† Annals of Congress, 1821-22.

dearly enjoyed, that he would be the next President. His own townsmen at a public dinner, given soon after he returned from Florida, saluted him by that title.* Thus gently was the train laid for his public nomination after a dramatic manner. At the Nashville celebration, July 4th, 1822, many of the New Orleans veterans being present, Governor Carroll presented the hero with a sword which the legislature of Tennessee had voted in 1819, in recognition of his public services. The two houses of this same legislature concurred unanimously in a resolution passed on the 20th of the month, which daringly proposed "to the people of the United States" Andrew Jackson for President, as "the soldier, the statesman, and the honest man." †

1821. Dec.

1822. July.

This Tennessee resolution, to which Jackson owed his *début*, was backed by the universal sentiment of a rude but vigorous State. It carried the greater force because it gave to the common people the opportunity they had wished, to be led against the trained politicians. One result very speedily developed, that they who had reckoned upon a contest narrowed down presently to one northern and one southern candidate were much disappointed. Not only would this strife of candidates be carried into the next Congress, as between caucus and no caucus, but the next House was likely to choose the President in the end, because no one among so many competitors would carry a majority of the electoral votes. The era of good feeling might last longer with the people, but it was nearly over with the leaders. Jefferson, for one, had little faith in Monroe's political theory. "You are told, indeed," he wrote to Gallatin about this time, "that there are no longer parties among us; that they are all now amalgamated; the lion and the lamb lie down together in peace. Do not believe a word of it. The same parties exist now as ever did." ‡ In point of fact the old national parties were disor-

* See Monroe MSS.; also account, Dec. 23, 1821, in 21 Niles's Register.

† See 23 Niles's Register; also Parton's Jackson.

‡ Gallatin's Works, Oct. 29, 1822; Jefferson's Works.

ganizing as the old issues died out; the present party names founded upon local or personal contentions were in proof of this; but those parties disorganized only to reorganize in due course of time under new names and with new and living issues.

Section II.

Period of Eighteenth Congress.

March 4, 1823—March 3, 1825.

Shortly after the adjournment of the seventeenth Con-
1823. gress died Brockholst Livingston of New York, one of the justices of the Supreme Court. For the vacancy the President selected Smith Thompson, his
March. Secretary of the Navy, as one whose conservative views and former experience on the bench gave assurance that the appointment was a safe one. But while Thompson held this transfer under advisement, Chancellor Kent, Sandford, and others, jurists of the same State, were canvassed for the vacancy.* Samuel L. Southard, of New Jersey, succeeded to the Navy Department, though not before Monroe had announced in cabinet meeting the change thus purposed, inviting comment from all present, while setting forth his reasons for thinking well of the
August. appointment. "I mention these reasons," he added, "because three of you are peculiarly related to the succession," and closed by expressing his con-

* See Monroe Corr. Strong objection to Kent was made on the score of ultra Federalism during the late war. In 1823, although virtually in the very prime of life, and with physical and mental vigor unimpaired, Kent was compelled to surrender the chancellorship of New York, because the State constitution disqualified all persons over sixty years of age for judicial office. By this enforced retirement, however, and the failure of his friends to secure for him the present vacancy on the United States bench, America and the civilized world had been the gainer; for Kent now accepted a professorship in Columbia College, and delivered the extensive course of lectures upon American Law from which he compiled his famous Commentaries. See 1 U. S. Jurist, 55, 66.

fidence in them all. No objections were offered to the new associate; and Southard, a man of decided ability, who had lately been chosen to the Senate, was the first son of New Jersey, that one of the original thirteen States hitherto ranking central in the Union, ever promoted to a seat in the national council.*

Another important appointment of the summer was that of John McLean, of Ohio, to be Postmaster General, in place of the veteran Meigs, whose ill-health had compelled him to retire. McLean's administrative capacity, which he had shown in a marked degree while commissioner of the Land Office, soon justified this advancement. The postal service, which was not yet self-supporting, needed just now an energetic manager, for many complained that mails were carelessly delivered or plundered. Between Philadelphia and Baltimore men with blackened faces and pistols had been known to stop the stage on the highway and demand the mail-bags, which, after cutting them open, they rifled of their contents, and then permitted the driver to go on.†

Under both McLean and his predecessor the selection of local postmasters was strictly confided by the President to the discretion of the Postmaster General, changes being made very seldom, nor these except for stated cause. In 1822 there had been great stir over the post-office at Albany. The incumbent was delinquent in his accounts, and a change was necessary. Meigs determined to appoint Van Rensselaer, a member of the House, who was strongly indorsed by most of the New York delegation; but Van Rensselaer was thought partial to Clinton, and this alarmed the anti-Clinton men. Instantly the whole Tammany influence at Washington, with the Vice-President and Van Buren at the head, bore down upon the President, even King and Secretary Thompson lending countenance to their request. The affair was so sudden, in fact, that there

* See 24 Niles's Register; J. Q. Adams's Diary, August, Sept., 1823.

† 24 and 25 Niles's Register.

had been no time to correspond with political friends at home. Delay was asked on various pretexts, but really so as to gain time for bringing out a candidate of their own for the place. A cabinet meeting was held. Meigs stated his wishes, and showed that to defer the matter was to keep a defaulter in office. The President decided not to interfere, and Van Rensselaer was accordingly appointed, as Meigs had advised.*

Here let us observe that the practice of appointing members of Congress to federal office, a practice originating with Washington himself, one which, under his next successor, gave to the Cabinet and Supreme bench a Marshall, and which now began to settle into a national usage,—was denounced in many quarters as insidious and debauching. Now and then a resolution disapproving the practice would be offered in one House or the other, or a proposal to amend the constitution so as to disqualify members of Congress from receiving such appointments during the term for which they had been elected. All this was in vain. But criticism was sometimes met by a sort of half apology to the public and half promises that the administration would not appoint thus, if others at all qualified and known to be qualified could be had to accept; and really the root of the evil consisted rather in permitting our legislators to solicit office at all, whether for themselves or others.† If the close interweaving of the British ministry and Parliament was too nearly copied in this country in awards of the public patronage, vicious abuses certainly had not yet crept into our system.

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*See J. Q. Adams's Diary, January, 1822; 21 Niles's Register. So violent was the local excitement over this change in the post-office that an indignation meeting was held at Albany by one faction to protest against the choice of Van Rensselaer, which was followed, however, by a counter-demonstration in his favor. Van Buren and Tompkins, though fanning the ardor of the remonstrants, admitted in their letters that Van Rensselaer was fit for the place. The great grievance dwelt upon was that the Executive had not waited long enough to give opportunity for a public expression to reach him from Albany.

† "My feet," said John Randolph, "have never had the dust of antechambers on them. I was never seen waiting, cap in hand, begging a favor from a Secretary for myself or my friend."

On the other hand, from the old English or European idea that one acquires a vested interest in his office, so that he must be pensioned off in order to make a vacancy for another, republican America had so far departed that public office was already looked upon as a sort of public favor, which was bestowed by a fickle mistress whose suitors hung about her like Diana's hounds.

The Spanish American missions were not very quickly filled; for though Congress had appropriated the needful sum to be used at discretion,* the fate of his military appointments in the Senate made Monroe cautious how he disposed of other offices in the recess. The attitude of Europe, too, and the critical situation of the revolutionized States themselves made it necessary to move with great circumspection, and even to discriminate in this new policy of recognition, a policy which as yet no power but the United States had seen fit to avow. But before the seventeenth Congress rose the main appointments had been sent in and confirmed. The list of ministers included Andrew Jackson to Mexico, Cæsar A. Rodney to Buenos Ayres, Richard C. Anderson of Kentucky to Colombia, and Heman Allen of Vermont to Chili. Jackson, whose selection seems to have been upon Adams's advice,† and not without an inward dread on the President's part that the general would take it for more than a delicate compliment, declined point-blank, and in declining made a flourish of the pen to express his equal disdain of the office and the Mexican government.‡ Rodney and Anderson proceeded to their distant posts, each having resigned

1823.

* *Supra*, p. 255.

† J. Q. Adams's Diary, Jan. 1823.

‡ See Monroe MSS.; 24 Niles's Register. Jackson's public letter flings out strongly at "the tyrant Iturbide."

Adams appears to have been quite anxious to compliment rivals with these South American missions. He had proposed offering Clay the appointment to Colombia, both because it would please Clay and have a good effect on the public. Monroe, however, was rather wary of the suggestion, and observed that, while perfectly willing to overlook Clay's unfriendly course, he never had felt that the administration stood in need of his support. Adams's Diary, 1822.

his seat in Congress; but up to December, 1823, neither had been officially heard from, nor was Allen quite ready to take his long voyage. Meantime a minister arrived with credentials from Colombia, which was the first, in fact, of these new republics to reciprocate the friendship our government had so spontaneously offered.*

In compliance with the laws of the late Congress relating to our new purchase, a territorial government was established for Florida. American principles were here favored, and yet there was shown some distrust of the old Spanish influence. Congress kept the ruling machinery under a strict national oversight, while the inhabitants of these united provinces were promised full and equal protection in their liberty, property, and religion. The first governor appointed under the new plan was William P. Duval of Kentucky, lately judge in East Florida. Once occupied and put in order, little more was heard of a peninsula upon which the public gaze had so long been fastened. Nearly a quarter of a century elapsed from the date of its annexation before little Florida reached the full stature of a State. Two causes at once interposed a check to its growth: first, a malignant fever, which in 1822 swept away many of the best citizens of Pensacola; next, the perilous nearness of fragmentary tribes of Seminole Indians, who hovered about the country between Pensacola and St. Augustine, robbing where they could, and yet at the point of starvation. To get from St. Augustine to Tallahassee was a painful journey made in an awkward carryall drawn by two wretched horses; Jacksonville being the only settlement of any size for the whole of the dreary route. The traveller was fortunate if after fording streams deep as a horse's breast he did not have to leave a broken wagon and finish the journey on foot. The exchange of flags was thought to have been the ruin of St. Augustine, for nearly all the inhabitants, being in some way dependent on the Spanish government, moved forthwith to Cuba. What then

* President's Message, December 2, 1823.

was this "land of disappointment" worth to us? Much in respect of local position. It gave us command of the Gulf of Mexico, affording several good harbors, and covering by its position the Mississippi and other great inland waters within our enlarged domains. By projecting a new bulwark towards the West Indies, islands which offered always a rich trade and were at present too feebly ruled, many of them, not to become an easy prey to civil dissensions, it enabled our government the better to counteract new schemes of conquest or commercial monopoly which European powers might be tempted to indulge. To Georgia and adjacent States was afforded a free passage to the gulf, and a safer one than formerly to the Atlantic. Buccaneers could no longer infest the borders. Nor could it be of slight advantage in dealing with the Seminoles themselves, that they were now converted from foreign to domestic foes. But of the territory acquired, and of its interior more especially, little was known, and less that enlivened. There were three varieties of soil: pine barrens, savannas, and marshes. The greater part of Florida consisted of boundless swamps of salt water or fresh, even the rivers spreading out into vast lagoons. On the barrens were fathomless pools into which the alligator plunged and disappeared. Some of the islands off the coast were pleasing, and in the sands of St. Augustine rare and delicate shells abounded. With an area of 58,600 square miles or more, greater than that of Illinois, Florida, which as a State proved nearly the size of Michigan, was pronounced to be as sterile in domestic plants, grasses, and vegetables as one could well conceive; its soil, like that of all low barren regions near the tropics, being more favorable to orchard fruit trees. As the land of oranges and the winter home of invalids, Florida's day dream had not begun. There were orange trees at St. Augustine; cabbage palmettos, too, near the coast; but it was coffee, cocoa, and the olive that the planter most wished in these times to add to his familiar staples, by coaxing the strange soil of a peninsula which, unique and mysterious, pointed like some index finger to another zone.

1821-23. Already was the ambition of new conquests towards the tropics, and following that index finger, stirring uneasily in the southern mind. Louisiana men were much dissatisfied because Texas and the green pastures west of the Sabine had been abandoned to Spain under the late treaty. Then, too, in the unsettled condition of the West Indies and Spanish America came rumors that England had designs upon Cuba; and this made Calhoun feverish that we should prevent her from seizing the island by seizing it first for ourselves. From Mexico came doleful accounts that robber bands infested the mountain passes between the capital and Vera Cruz, while the imperialists were fighting Santa Anna and the rebels; and General Wilkinson, who turned up in the city of the Montezumas, visiting it for his health, as he expressed it, seized the pen, soldier of fortune to the last, and announcing to the President that the people of Mexico wished annexation to the Union, offered his services in such a cause.*

Let us now take up the thread of foreign relations which has long been laid by. Florida under that head, at least, we may part with. Already did affairs abroad wear a portentous look. Europe remained unsettled, uneasy; nor could conference after conference, after working over the map and marking off new jurisdictions, reach a common solution of those weightier problems upon which the happiness and tranquillity of each people depended. What should henceforth be the practical relation between sovereign and subjects, whether the crown should compel the people, or the people compel in the name of the crown, whether legislatures and the press ought to be indulged or suppressed; these were vital issues pressing upon every organized society of Europe from the Ural mountains to the ocean; issues which could neither be waived nor promptly settled. Since 1790 the old order of things had forever changed. Nothing could restore the former supremacy of the throne

* See Monroe MSS., 1822; 29 Niles's Register; J. Q. Adams's Diary.

which the French revolution and an armed democracy had so rudely overturned. Royal families had been expelled and their sacred persons molested; the choicest juices of Bourbon veins and the base clot of a Danton had dyed the same guillotine. A rude Corsican soldier had wrested sceptres from kings and given them into the polluted grasp of brothers, comrades, and favorites; he had thrown the imperial purple over his own shoulders and dragged dynasties at his chariot wheels; dragged down himself in turn only to redouble the force of the lesson that government is the divine attribute of no mortal, and to dispel from the popular mind that most essential element of blind loyalty,—illusion. When kingdom and crown came tumbling down, what should safer guide in the new and wiser era than the common sense of society? And leaving to lineage, if need be, the pretence of power, who should exercise it in substance but men of character, force, and integrity, who sympathized with that common sense and were capable of giving it the best expression? Against these dawning sentiments, democratic in tendency and dangerous to the supremacy of monarchs now firmly seated, the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia had organized in 1815 as the "Holy Alliance;" their avowed purpose being to maintain as a Christian doctrine the sovereign rights of legitimacy, that softer word * for despotism; and in 1821, precisely when Napoleon breathed his last in distant exile, their joint manifesto went forth from Laybach that "useful or necessary changes in legislation, and in the administration of States, ought only to emanate from the free will and well-weighed conviction of those whom God has rendered responsible for power."† Standing upon this elementary principle as truth eternal and frankly disavowing "all pretended reform operated by revolt and open hostility;" or in other words, claiming to be rulers irresponsible to their subjects, and denying to the latter the right

* So Clay has admirably expressed it in one of his speeches

† Newspapers of the day; 8 Knight's England.

to participate in affairs save by way of suppliant petition, they proceeded to enforce these ideas with the intolerant zeal usual among tyrants and fanatics. The Prussian monarch broke the promise of a representative government which he had made to his own people. Insurrections in Naples and Piedmont which might have given these parts of Italy liberal constitutions were put down with the aid of the Russian autocrat. To Spain, whose people had rescued their Cortes from the bigot Ferdinand, the Alliance next directed their course, bent on casting the continent once more into the chains of the eighteenth century; and now was threatened collision with Spanish America, and the ideas and policy of the new world.

England, on the contrary, widened in the new direction. It was impossible that her rulers should go back to ideas repudiated with the last of the Stuarts; even a tory ministry, therefore, might well watch an opportunity to thwart these new designs without declaring openly against them. Castlereagh had dissented, though perhaps feebly, from the ideas promulgated by the Holy Alliance. Their plans and wishes produced an easier impression upon France; for Louis XVIII. was Bourbon at heart, though, profiting by the terrible experience of Paris and Versailles, he had yielded to his people, as though out of the royal bounty, a liberal charter, which he had the good sense not to recall. An artful plan was contrived in the French cabinet for the rescue of Ferdinand from his subjects. But relations were first adjusted with the United States upon some delicate points which had arisen.

The sixteenth Congress had before adjourning in the spring of 1820 passed a restrictive act against French vessels * on the principle of reciprocity; a principle our government had long been struggling, though with very little encouragement, to maintain against both France and Great Britain. Negotiations followed, which on the suggestion of the French government were transferred from Paris to

* Act May 15, 1820.

Washington, for it seems that new differences had arisen. First, a French vessel, the *Apollon*, had been seized for violating our revenue laws; next there was a dispute over the true meaning of that clause in the treaty of 1803 ceding Louisiana, which promised to treat the ships of France upon the footing of "the most favored nation" in ports specified.* De Neuville, who had been made a Baron during his visit to France, arrived at Washington early in 1821. He was cordially received once more by the President and old friends, and took up under promising auspices the task of re-establishing commercial relations between his country and the United States on a friendly footing. But Adams showed a rough, or at least unyielding temper; and the more so when he found the French minister bringing subtle influences to bear upon other members of the cabinet and Crawford meddling with his management of the case.† The negotiation limped along for more than a year into the summer of 1822. Over the affair of the *Apollon* and other claims which grew out of French privateering there were some stormy interviews at the State Department.‡ A convention which was finally concluded in June, 1822, with Monroe's full sanction, smoothed out the matter in dispute; and De Neuville soon after took his leave with agreeable expressions, which the President reciprocated in a speech unusually frank and informal for such ceremonious occasions.§ 1821-22.

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* U. S. Statutes at Large; President's Message, 1821.

† See 5 J. Q. Adams's Diary, Feb., 1821-June, 1822.

‡ "Well, sir," said De Neuville to our Secretary, frantically, at one of these interviews, "it is my individual opinion that if satisfaction is not given, France ought to declare war!" and he rushed out of the room. J. Q. Adams's Diary, November, 1821. "Does France really want to go to war with the United States?" asked the President in cabinet, when this scene was related. Calhoun thought it probable. "If she does," responded Monroe, "we will overset them all."

§ Diary, June, 1822. Adams, who was still ruffled in temper over the "whispering gallery" influences which had been brought to bear upon the negotiation, thought the convention less favorable to the United States than he would have made it if left alone to manage in his own way. Gallatin thought it yielded more than was needful.

It was not long after De Neuville's return that the designs of Louis upon Spain, in furtherance of the policy proposed by the Holy Alliance, were unmasked at the Congress of Vienna. Upon the Spanish frontiers at the south a French army had been quietly collected under the pretence of affording sanitary protection against a fever that was raging at Barcelona. The real object in view was to overthrow the constitutional government in Spain and liberate Ferdinand VII. from the trammels which his subjects, insisting upon their former privileges, had succeeded in placing upon the tyrannous exercise of power. 1823. January. This design, plainly avowed by Louis XVIII. in opening the Chambers at the end of January, 1823, a hundred thousand troops, commanded by a prince of the family, accomplished with the aid of a French squadron in the course of a single campaign. The invading April–June. army crossed the Pyrenees in April, and occupied Madrid on the 24th of May. They overran Spain; and reaching Cadiz over all opposition, accomplished the release of the perfidious monarch who had been detained there. The Cortes and new constitution he had given to his subjects were trampled down; Ferdinand was restored to his former despotic authority; and too easily dispirited, the feeble and degenerate sons of Spain sought slumber once more in the arms of oppression. This was Spain's last effort to escape the thraldom of superstition. Counter-revolution had, of course, accomplished its end; for the spontaneous gift of a monarch who holds power and feels no pressure can rarely be a generous one. Great Britain's course was the non-committal one, usual under such circumstances. Refusing to take part in the war against freedom and popular rights, her ministry had strained every effort to keep the European Congress equally uncompromised. Ostensibly, therefore, all the other great European powers refrained from participating in a war waged in the name simply of France and Spain; but the policy of that war, the dark plot of absolutism to trample out the

spark of reviving liberty, was well understood by all the civilized world to have emanated from the inner councils of the Holy Alliance.

It is worthy of remark that neither at France nor Spain had the United States a proper minister during this eventful summer. Gallatin, who had but lately returned home for political reasons to be later stated, declined to go back to the French court. In his place James Brown of Louisiana, a senator of experience in the foreign committee work, a Virginian by birth, was after some hesitation appointed.* The war was over in effect before he reached Paris. As for the mission to Spain, Hugh Nelson of Virginia had been confirmed early this same year as Forsyth's successor; but the frigate in which he sailed was stopped by the French blockading squadron at the port of Cadiz, the war being then in progress, and he was not permitted to enter.† 1823.

At this perilous transit, which already cast a threatening shadow over the western continent and Spain's colonial inhabitants, Great Britain, by a natural impulse of sympathy in danger, drew closer to the United States. Rush felt the approach of its ministry on various occasions. Since Castlereagh's suicide in 1822, Canning had returned to the foreign office. His old taunting tone was gone, and he showed nothing but courtesy in his intercourse with the American minister. At a dinner-party given to the diplomatic corps he invited Rush, who sat near him, to take a glass of wine. Our minister proposed as a toast, "Success to neutrals." "Good!" said Canning, and drank it off. This led Rush to thank Canning for a speech he had lately made in the House of Commons, which contained some flattering reference to the neutral doctrines of our government in 1823. 1822. 1823. April.

* Adams in his Diary speaks of Brown as a man of genius but timid, having (as special qualifications for drawing him to Paris) rheumatism, fortune, and a showy wife. Diary, August, 1823. These qualifications answered well enough for the present duties of the mission.

† See message and documents, December, 1783; Monroe MSS.

1793. "Yes," replied Canning, "and I spoke sincerely;" and he went on to say that he had lately read with the utmost interest the American State papers of that epoch, and particularly Jefferson's letters. "They are admirable," he added; "they form, as far as they go, a complete neutral code." These words and Canning's fervent manner of expressing himself Rush felt the more, because the Russian ambassador sat near them, and most probably overheard the whole conversation.* Soon afterwards our minister received a revised copy of this speech, which in a private note, full of personal compliment, Canning begged him to forward to President Monroe.†

Notwithstanding these friendly overtures, Rush had found the ministry strangely reluctant to recognize the Spanish republics, and thereby place England upon common ground with the United States, though freely admitting the justice of taking such a step. The day had arrived when all America or its greater part might be considered lost to Europe, so far as any tie of political dependence was concerned. Great Britain would never again lend her aid to making up the dispute between Spain and her colonies; "but," added Canning, "we shall not interfere to prevent it."† In truth, Canning was hampered by relations with the continental powers; he dreaded being dragged into a new war; like most of his countrymen, he was tired of crusading and defending Europe and protecting mankind, and wished to relapse a little into self-protecting selfishness.§ Diplomacy, then, and combinations to overawe the allied Powers he preferred to a bold, aggressive policy, which must of necessity have inflamed their resistance.

The rapid successes of the French arms in Spain convinced the British government by the summer of 1823 that the impartial spectator could be safely personated no

* Rush's letter, April 24, 1823; Monroe MSS.

† Monroe MSS.: Rush's letter, July 13, 1823.

‡ Rush's Court of London, 1821.

§ See Sydney Smith's humorous statement of the prevailing feeling in 2 Memoirs and Letters.

longer. British selfishness was itself in danger. If compassion for the South American patriots or for the crushed people of the peninsula could not move the generous heart of this nation, ample cause was found at least for alarm in the new proselyting schemes which the Holy Alliance, thus far resistlessly advancing, had begun to unfold. The times returned which touched even moneyed worldings with dismay. Canning received notice by August that as soon as the military objects in Spain were attained, August. which would be very speedily, France intended to propose a Congress of the great powers with respect to the affairs of Spanish America. By November the ministry of Louis might be seen pressing this plan with great eagerness, and artfully appealing to British cupidity to share in the plunder of a readjustment whose purpose was to set aside Spain's recovery of her colonies on the one hand as hopeless, and the new self-governing establishments of America, on the other, as a mockery.* It was no new rumor in court circles that France had intrigued to set up a Bourbon dynasty in the western hemisphere,† and who could pledge the intentions of Russia and the other illiberal powers who occupied at present the convenient background ?

Canning, in his first disquiet at the news, turned to our minister. Rush has preserved full minutes of a remarkable interview, held September 18th, together with the confidential correspondence of August, which led up to it. September. The time, said Canning, has now arrived for Great Britain and the United States to understand one another on the question of the Spanish American colonies, and to consider whether that understanding ought not to be avowed openly. Could not a convention be drawn up on these points between the two countries, and a joint stand taken against the continental alliance? For

* See official correspondence, 8 Knight's England; Rush's Court of London; Monroe MSS.

† See report alluded to, Dipl. Corr. 1820, that a Bourbon king was to be placed over Buenos Ayres, a report which Castlereagh had discredited at the time.

every day military events in Spain were drawing to a crisis favorable to the designs of France; and should the proposed European Congress be called and held under French auspices, grave complications in the colonial problem were sure to arise, of momentous import to the United States as well as Great Britain. In the interview of September 18th, Canning went a step further. He suggested that perhaps the United States might choose to be represented if this Congress were actually held, and intimated further that he would ask an invitation for that purpose, and perhaps decline to attend on England's part unless both powers were admitted. These proposals, made one after another with eager haste, Rush had to answer on the spur of the moment; but he did so with great discretion. "My country," said he, "has acknowledged the independence of these Spanish American republics, and wishes to see them received into the family of nations. Upon the other points involved its policy agrees with that of Great Britain. I must procure instructions from home before entering into any joint understanding; and more especially before consenting to take part in a conference of European sovereigns, for our settled policy is to keep out of foreign entanglements. Immediate recognition offers, however, the true basis for our concert. Let Great Britain at once recognize the Spanish American republics, and complication will disappear, for we shall then stand on common ground." From such a conclusion Canning drew back, and most dubiously the interview ended, Rush reporting to his government the conversation that had passed between them.*

In various particulars our relations with England had of late grown cordial. The prohibition placed on commerce with the British colonies by the act of 1820 had since been

* Monroe MSS.; public documents; Rush's Court of London, August, September, 1823. There was a later conference, September 26th, at which Canning reiterated his views still more eagerly. Rush responded substantially as before. After this the subject was dropped for a long time.

removed or suspended, in return for reciprocal favors accorded by Parliament of date simultaneous with the French convention.* The Russian Emperor's award of damages in our favor for the deported slaves was confirmed, though not settled;† and a main line had been run between the United States and Canada, though the north-east boundary yet remained unsettled.‡ But Canning, as later events show, had experienced no great change of heart towards the United States; and the blunt Castlereagh, with all his faults, America could far better have trusted in such an emergency. Canning up to 1823 was a tory of the tories; as a poet, the satirist of "the friend of humanity;" and furthermore as a statesman, one who devoted his caustic wit, logic, and eloquence to the unsparing ridicule of liberal men and measures. Not sovereignty of the people, but sovereignty over the people was his maxim. But he was ambitious for himself and his country; Great Britain, her arts, her commerce, her strength, he desired to advance to glory through everything; moreover, his bent of mind was practical. Hence the specious pliancy with which he now took up liberalism as a counterpoise to the Holy Alliance; the champion of liberalism (to recall Rush's phrase), without ever having been its child.

The secret despatches received from our minister at London excited in the official circle of Washington a profound interest. Rush's conduct was at the same time highly approved. "You could not have met Canning's proposals better," the President wrote him, "if you had had the whole American cabinet at your right hand." First of all, Monroe by letter consulted Jefferson and Madison in confidence upon the momentous question thus presented. Jefferson with quick enthusiasm October.

* See Act March 1, 1823; President's Message, December, 1822.

† Treaty July 12, 1822, referring to act of Parliament of June 24, 1822.

‡ Decision of Commissioners June 18, 1822; 8 U. S. Statutes at Large; President's Message, December, 1823.

approved the idea of a joint co-operation with Great Britain against the plans of the Alliance in this western hemisphere; sketching boldly the outlines of an American system, not Great Britain's but ours, of "keeping out of our land all foreign powers, of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations;" and arguing that to draw over to our side at this crisis the most powerful member of Europe would be to maintain our principle, not to depart from it, to prevent instead of provoking war.* Madison's mind yielded assent less easily to the proposals of a minister whose roughness he well remembered; and concurring with Jefferson in the main, though cautiously, he vexed his mind again and again to discover some astute motive behind Canning's smooth approaches.†

Fortified by these opinions, Monroe prepared the most remarkable document of his official career; an annual message with paragraphs which he well knew would be read and pondered over by every cabinet and legislative body in Europe and the western world, as well as by the Congress to whom the message was addressed. The draft he showed to his advisers, but conferred with them calmly, as one who had made up his own mind. Wirt was timorous, Calhoun open to conviction, Adams bold as a lion. The news that Cadiz had surrendered produced upon Calhoun, at least, a

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* Jefferson's Works, October 24, 1823. The opening strain of this letter gives the keynote of the policy to be announced. "The question presented by the letters you have sent me is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of independence. That made us a nation, this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening upon us. And never could we embark on it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to meddle in cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should therefore have a system of her own, separate and apart from those of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be to make our hemisphere that of freedom."

† Monroe MSS.; Madison's Writings, October–November, 1823.

momentary panic.* But the President, whose experience in European diplomacy we should remember was greater than that of all his cabinet, felt confident of his ground. He had determined neither on the one hand to provoke the Alliance by a tone of taunting defiance, nor on the other to give this country the appearance of taking a position subordinate to Great Britain. As to British proposals, indeed, it was conceded that Rush's ground was the true one. We were stronger, knowing that Great Britain opposed the Alliance as we did; but unless Canning would pledge his government to recognize South American independence no immediate co-operation appeared possible.†

The President's message of December, 1823, toned down from the solemn exordium of the draft, which Adams feared would alarm our people like a clap of thunder and seem like a summons to arms, put forward, therefore, two distinct declarations. One bore directly against the plans of hostile intervention cherished by the Holy Alliance in the flush of victory: "that we should consider an attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The other, as a more general proposition, involving the rights and interests of the United States:‡ "that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers."§ In these two propositions consist the celebrated "Monroe doctrine;" a doctrine, we may add, which our

* Crawford, for reasons to be hereafter stated, took no part in these important councils; and Adams inclined to Madison's opinion that the Canning proposals were impelled by British interest more than any principle of generous liberty. The cabinet conferences on this whole question are set out in J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1823.

† Adams's Diary, November, 1823; Monroe MSS.

‡ This latter proposition was simultaneously asserted in the negotiation for defining rights on the north-west coast of this continent with Russia.

§ See President's Message, December 2, 1823, together with the context expressed at greater length.

later statesmen have developed at convenience, linking it inseparably with the name of the President who thus pronounced it, and seeing in it what many hundred millions of American freemen, in the long vista of coming centuries, will still better recognize, if free institutions are capable of growth and endurance, the sacred stone of chartered liberty in this western world.

This doctrine, so profound of import, was not, we apprehend, the sudden creation of individual thought, but the result rather of slow processes in our public mind, which had been constantly intent upon problems of self-government, and closely observant of our continental surroundings; though carried forward, no doubt, like other ideas in the earlier epoch, by the energy and clearer conviction of statesmen who could foresee and link conceptions into a logical chain. Neutrality as to European affairs, freedom from all entangling alliances with the old world, was the legacy of experience which Washington bequeathed to his successors. This might have seemed at first to discourage all external influence, and remit our Union to the selfish and isolated pursuit of its own interests. But the annexation of Louisiana proved that the Union itself was destined to expand over an immense area of this continent. And when, inspired by our example, the Spanish colonies of the American continent were seen one after another to shake off the yoke of the parent country, and spontaneously assert their independence, the philanthropic leaders—and none among them so quickly or so persistently as Jefferson—began to predict the fraternal co-operation in the future of these free republics, all modelled alike, in a common scheme for self-preservation which should shut out Europe, its rulers and its systems of monarchy forever from this hemisphere; for by such means only could the germ of self-government expand, and the luxuriant growth of this hardy plant make it impossible that the monarchical idea should ever strike a deep root in American soil. By 1823, then, the new maxim as a fundamental one was by no means unfamiliar to our political leaders. Sympathy

for sister-republics, as well as self-interest, imposed upon the United States the announcement of that maxim. When liberty struggled in America we were not—we could not be—neutral. The time of announcement and the choice of expression, nevertheless, awaited events. Pending that announcement, Clay, the ardent champion of the Spanish American cause, made speeches in his own State, which brought out the principle in terms not less striking than any which Adams has preserved in his Diary. The time for the announcement was when, following close upon our acceptance of these American republics as independent States, the Holy Alliance threatened to overturn them. Did a President in the bosom confidence of Jefferson and Madison, who had conducted the portfolio of State for years before his latest promotion, need to take his ideas from any subordinate? Allowing, therefore, to Adams his full praise as an adviser in this emergency, and giving to the choice of words for defining a well-understood policy whatever merit it may deserve, we may remark that the calm, dull phraseology of this message is sufficiently in the Presidential vein to deserve the epithet original in the most liberal sense usually applied to State papers. It was the courage of a great people personified in a firm chief magistrate that put the fire into those few momentous though moderate sentences, and made them glow like the writing at Belshazzar's feast.

Monroe meant neither that the United States should monopolize the new world, nor that we should fight single-handed the battles of sister republics; a policy of consummate statesmanship could not in such hands have been perverted into one of consummate statecraft. The danger was near our door and he repelled it. Threat was opposed by threat, and a course of policy laid open whose direction the future would determine. It is not, then, the genius of creating which belongs to Monroe, but, as with most great administrators, the genius of apprehending, of taking the immediate responsibility; and rarely, if ever, has responsibility been assumed, under the constitutional system of

these United States, by any Executive so utterly apart from the sanction of the legislature. A Presidential dictum has passed into the fundamental law of American diplomacy. And this crowning effort of Monroe's career contrasted well with that to which it stood opposed; for the main motive was to shelter honorably these tender blossoms of liberty on kindred soil from the cold Siberian blast of despotism.*

* Gilman's Life of James Monroe, p. 156, *et seq.*, shows diligent research by the learned author to discover how the "Monroe doctrine" became worked out in Monroe's name. Pownall, in 1780, Monroe, in 1784, Jefferson, in 1785, and Washington, in 1788, are all quoted in proof that thus early the fathers of this republic recognized the value of complete separation from European politics. But the Monroe doctrine belongs rather to our later national era, as our text indicates. If careful study among the writings of those who influenced this era can produce a just conviction, that conviction is, that the first seeds of this "Monroe doctrine" were dropped by Jefferson, who, by the season of the Spanish American revolt, was in politics the admitted preceptor of America (see vol. ii, p. 202, Jefferson's letter in 1808). By 1818–1820, the idea of coalescing the American nations in an American system as against Europe was by no means unfamiliar to several of our statesmen, and Jefferson, August 4, 1820, sets that idea out boldly enough.

The assertion of the late Senator Sumner in his "Prophetic Voices," that the Monroe doctrine proceeded from Canning, is easily falsified. Nor could so early and so zealous a friend of the South American revolutionists as Clay, whose genius, like Jefferson's, had much of the prophetic fire, have failed to grasp the idea. In a public speech delivered by him during the summer of 1821 (to which no student of the "Monroe doctrine" appears to have alluded), Clay lays bare the aggressive designs of the Holy Alliance, and plainly declares that a sort of counterpoise should be formed in the two Americas in favor of national independence and liberty, to operate by the force of example and by moral influence; that here a rallying point should exist for freemen and for freedom (20 Niles's Register, 301, July, 1821). By the fall of 1823, therefore, the new dogma must have been fairly rooted not only in Monroe's mind but in that of the American public. Indeed, had it not, would it not have been criticized and controverted, in and out of Congress, instead of finding so ready acceptance the moment it was officially uttered?

As to the mere phrasing of the message upon this doctrine, Secretary Adams and the President had a good mutual understanding, as the Diary shows us; and both were clear upon the policy to be pursued. The more debatable proposition of the two,—that these continents "are not longer subjects for any new European colonial estab-

Monroe's message produced abroad the intended effect, arresting instant attention. "It is not only the best," wrote Minister Brown from Paris, "but the best timed State paper I have ever read." * Spanish American securities rose at once in the stock market; the Holy Alliance was foiled. In less than twelve months all apprehension of European interference with cis-Atlantic affairs had subsided. The solemn remonstrance of the United States and the American example, the true antidote of despotism, contributed to this result, as did also, in a lesser degree, the ill-success of the allies themselves in re-establishing order in Spain and Portugal. The thought that Mexico or some other of Spain's lost provinces might gladly put an end to civil turmoil by offering the crown to some prince of royal lineage faded for a while out of French diplomacy; it was, in truth, a Napoleonic idea, to be revived, re-adapted, and terribly falsified some forty years later. Finally England's discountenance dealt the whole project a death-blow; for Canning, as it appears, unable to bring Rush to a joint declaration, warned France in his own way that if force were used or British commerce molested in the effort to reconstruct the Spanish colonies, England would declare their independence.† Though satirical over the Monroe doctrine in its broader aspects, he commended its present application. He defied Metternich and his in-

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lishment"—a statement which referred more immediately to the north-west coast question, which was then under discussion with Russia, whose part in the Holy Alliance our cabinet positively detested,—Adams put forward in a conference July 17, 1823, quite distinctly. Perhaps this sentence was of his own framing, but the evidence is not certain. Plumer's Diary of 1824 (see Gilman, 171) is explained by comparing its hearsay testimony with Adams's written entries. See further next c., President Adams's message upon the Panama mission, explaining the doctrine as "announced by my predecessor to the world."

For a claim made (1902) by Mr. Worthington C. Ford, that Secretary Adams drafted the "Monroe doctrine" paragraphs of President Monroe's present message, see Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings, vol. xv.

* Monroe MSS., April, 1824.

† Rush's Court of London; Monroe MSS.

trigues, and by 1825 had worked out his own plan of British recognition, not by the avowal of an open principle, but by artfully negotiating treaties with the new republics in the interest of British commerce. Yet Canning claimed higher ground for his policy, and a personal glory which the United States was at least entitled to share. "I sought," said he, "materials of compensation in another hemisphere. Contemplating Spain, such as our ancestors had known her, I resolved that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old."*

1823–24. The first session of the eighteenth Congress, the body before which Monroe's famous message was read, lasted from December 1, 1823, to May 27, 1824. This Congress advanced greatly upon its predecessor in point of ability and influence. It was the first Congress to assemble under the new apportionment; consequently the present House represented fairly the population of the whole Union as newly reckoned, with New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio in the ascendant scale. It was a Congress to which statesmen, experienced and eloquent, returned to lead once more to loftier principle. To the Senate weight of years and practical experience were in these days the usual passport. Already did Samuel Smith fill the chair of the lamented Pinkney. With these men of earlier times, James Lloyd of Massachusetts, elected for Otis's unexpired term, and John Taylor of Virginia, who now returned, those fathers of the Senate, King, Gaillard, and Macon, might talk over in a leisure hour old scenes soon to be forgotten. To newer men, like Benton and Van Buren, who were just beginning to shine in this branch, was now added, in Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina, a lawyer of brilliant promise, who, singularly for those days, began his national career in the more dignified branch of Congress, without so much as the experience of State Executive to show for credentials.

* 16 Hansard's Debates, 397; 8 Knight's England.

His election had displaced a Crawford senator from South Carolina, and another of the same faction was dropped in Tennessee,—Williams, who had led the charge against the President's military nominations in the previous Congress,* and whose defeat Jackson's friends compassed successfully soon after his nomination for the Presidency by the masterly move of proposing Jackson himself for United States Senator; so that the thrice-crowned hero now entered the capital with drums beating and flags flying, to conduct his own canvass for 1824 at the very citadel of political intrigue and in the near presence of his competitors.

But it was the House whose changes of membership promised the more decided influence upon the cause of legislation. Clay was back, stronger in popularity than before, and better attuned in temper to the administration. Here too was Webster, in the rising majesty of his renown, appearing, after seven years' absence from this body, as a Boston and Massachusetts independent, a man of pronounced anti-slavery views, so far as slave trade and slave annexation were concerned, a splendid orator, the leader of New England conservatism in politics, and very reverent of Federalist traditions; nevertheless a conservative under way, and since Pinkney's death the foremost of advocates at the American bar. The bright and fluent Forsyth returned, having laid aside Madrid and the diplomatic office. Crowninshield, formerly Secretary of the Navy, represented the Salem district. Randolph was once more in his place. And last of these returned wanderers for mention was Edward Livingston, once of New York, but now of New Orleans, who renewed in this body a political connection which had been severed in the days of alien and sedition. A strangely pathetic interest attached to this man of superior ability. In mature life he so well atoned for his earlier fault,† becoming so distinguished in his adopted State of Louisiana as counsel, jurist, and codifier, that the family escutcheon, never before tarnished, gained new glory by quartering where a star

* See *supra*, p. 262.

† See vol. ii, p. 53.

which sank flamed anew in the sky. After a wider range of experience another member of this same House, new at present to national surroundings, was marked for a checkered career; Sam Houston, who came into Congress a roystering specimen of the Tennessee frontiersman, getting into print not so much for his talents, in these years, as the capacity to quarrel. There is no banishment, no ostracism under our American system save the social one; and that oftentimes is terrible to bear. But no people forgive and forget so quickly as ours; and, thanks to the bounteous system which clusters so many independent destinies as one, new States, new scenes, a thousand new avenues to an honorable career, stand open, where the oppressed and repentant may live down the past and win the future.

In such a House as this, newly composed, newly apportioned, the speakership came back to Clay without an effort. Of the two who had occupied the curtained throne since he sat there, Taylor declined to offer himself, while Barbour's temerity was rebuked on the first ballot by a poll of 42 votes to Clay's 139. Having arranged the Committees with McLane of Delaware for chairman of the ways and means, Webster of the judiciary, Tod of Pennsylvania of the manufactures, Crowninshield of naval, and Forsyth of foreign affairs, and both Taylor and Barbour prominent in the secondary places, Clay led on the floor, as his friends had wished, in the chief measures of national policy which promised a rallying ground for new parties.

Old dissensions in foreign policy now disappearing, the present contest, so far as it could be one of principle at all, narrowed down to domestic issues; or in other words, (1) to internal improvements under national auspices, (2) to tariff for the protection of home manufactures. On these two themes, both agitated of late among the people and known as the "American system," Clay's clarion had first set the echoes flying. It now sounded the onset; for it had been well understood that the first House assembled under the new census should begin the battle in earnest.

Internal improvement was not easily pressed after Monroe's late veto, but the idea took too strong a hold of the people not to do good service for the election campaign. Both Adams and Calhoun were understood to be strongly committed to a general system of the kind, amendment or no amendment, thus militating the President's views; and as for Clay, he had, ever since 1816, been trying to bring about some rational system which should multiply roads and canals, from the Passamaquoddy to New Orleans and transversely, as the true means of facilitating inland commerce and knitting all parts of the Union closely together.* Territorial improvements, some discretionary surveys, were confided to the President at this first session. Otherwise the subject was laid aside until after the election. Clay's eloquence upon his pet subject, the Cumberland road, did not avail until late in the second session, when an act for continuing that road to Zanesville was placed before the retiring President, framed so as to obviate his constitutional scruples. This, as the Treasury showed a safe surplus, he good-naturedly signed on the last day of his official term.†

The tariff contest, however, was sharper, and came sooner to a conclusion. Tod reported in the House a bill from his committee in January, 1824, and in the debate which ensued Clay led on the side of the protectionists.‡ The combination of the planting and commercial interest against the bill was a formidable

1824. Jan.–March.

* See Colton's Clay; Speeches, 1816, etc.

† See Act March 3, 1825; *supra*, p. 254. In the Senate, January, 1824, Van Buren had offered an amendment to the constitution proposing that Congress should have power to make roads and canals, while at the same time guarding the rights of States, by requiring the consent of the local legislature and that expenditure should be under the local direction. The policy of internal improvement was so popular in these days that opposition on the constitutional ground appeared the only practicable one.

‡ See Annals of Congress, 25 Niles's Register. Niles gives an interesting analysis of the vote, comparing it with that of 1818 in the same branch of Congress. The eastern States had fallen off wonderfully in the support of protection as a policy; there had also been an

one, embracing Forsyth, Randolph, and Philip Barbour, together with Webster, whose district still favored free trade. Differences arose upon particular items, even among the friends of the bill; for after all a true tariff is less an affair of principle than of details. In a house well committed to the theory of protection the bill was carried by only 105 to 102, after a debate of nearly ten weeks. In the Senate there was less discussion of principles; but the bill received numerous amendments, and the vote on a third reading stood 25 to 22. The casting vote of the presiding officer in each branch and an adjustment by conference of the points upon which the two Houses disagreed settled the last details of the act, which, after all, was one of moderate protection. Most of the candidates for the Presidency favored this measure, which was popular outside of Congress, especially in Pennsylvania and at the west; and, contested as the ground had been, every inch of it with great ardor and ability, the act as finally enrolled illustrated admirably —so Adams has recorded—the practical workings of our national system, with its spirit of mutual accommodation and concession.*

April 9.

April-May.

Against the policy of a protective tariff farmers and shipping merchants raised the cry of "monopoly" and "prohibitory laws." "We would rejoice," they said, "to see home manufactures established, provided they grew up naturally and spontaneously; but not by levying an unequal tax to enrich the rich by fostering high bounties which favor capital at the cost of individual labor, by the adoption of any policy corrupting to the public morals and

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unexpected change in the representation of New York to the same side. Virginia and the South remained consistently opposed, notwithstanding favorable letters from Jefferson; but New Jersey and Pennsylvania stood their ground, and the union of the west saved the bill. Clay, as Speaker, refrained from voting.

* See 6 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, May 1824; also Annals of Congress; 26 Niles's Register; Act May 22, 1824. Tod, who had reported the House bill, now retired from Congress to go upon the bench in Pennsylvania.

hindering the genuine progress of our people." On the other hand, they who had taken up the fostering of native industries cited the late financial distress in favor of their position. A home market, they argued, was essential to the prosperity of a nation like ours. Flooded by excessive imports and drained of specie, our trade of late had been drifting to ruin. If commerce could be favored by Congress, so should manufactures. Such was the staple of conflicting argument in and out of Congress, both parties calling mass meetings in the various towns and cities, and moving for popular effect. Protection ideas gained ground; and even without any decided encouragement from Congress at all, American manufacturers were felt to be steadily growing, though positive statistics could not be had.* A fixed policy suited this interest even better than bounty, a word which grated harshly upon the American ear. But the present victory in Congress could not content the friends of this new system. Manufacturers of the middle States worked skillfully upon the grain producing west to persuade the farmer that his interests and theirs were identical. They had hopes of converting the east, for Europe was now the carrier of her own commodities, and the shipping interest had declined. But the southern planters, and, most of all, the cotton raising interest, leaned strongly to the other side of the question. They wished nothing done which should tend to diminish their trade with Great Britain, and the jealousy with which this section regarded northern manufacturers and all protective systems boded future trouble.†

With these tariff debates and the tariff act of 1824 opens the vista of new national parties. Not yet did Clay and Webster come into that alliance, which in combining the sympathetic with the intellectual school of oratory, the

* Statistics of manufactures had been ordered under the census act of 1820; but the results proved discordant as before, so that no attempt to collect such figures was made in the census of 1830.

† See Niles's Register, 1821-23, *passim*.

power of exhortation with that of matchless argument, was the most remarkable ever made in any deliberative body of this western world. Clay could introduce and manage a bill or resolution, while Webster made the best speech in favor of adopting it. Both inclined to a strong central government and the broad construction of national powers, though brought up in opposite political schools,—Clay as a Republican, Webster as a Federalist. In influence and methods they were the complement of one another. Clay was ardent, sympathetic, a man to be loved and fought for, in spite of all blemishes. If he missed fire once, he was to be tried again; he made the warmest friends and the bitterest enemies. Webster, on the one hand, seldom made enemies, standing, as he did, on a higher and more solitary plane, less approachable by friend or foe. The quality of his greatness was supremely intellectual; men thought him infallible, almost superhuman; worship was the frenzy he excited in the popular breast, and thousands who literally idolized him believed him free from the common temptations of public life and the self-absorption of its ambitions. In these purer years of his career his soar was like the eagle's and his rising sun a glorious birth. No one who has seen and heard Daniel Webster in his prime can liken his oratory or his personal presence to that of any other mortal man. Chaste, simple, compact, but strong, moving in one grand and steady current, onward, right onward, his speech gathered volume as he warmed with the theme, until a magnificent torrent bore down all before it. The stream that widens to a river or the regiment that swells to a host—such metaphors only can describe his progress to a climax. No man so rose to the grandeur of an occasion. But however impassioned the effect produced, the orator was himself cool, self-controlled, and always deliberate; for he seemed somehow to possess Prospero's magic art, so as to create a tempest by a wave of the wand, confident that he could calm it when he was ready. His power of statement was remarkable. Force and utterance he relied upon as qualities to produce conviction, but clearness equally. His strong

and rugged sentences, Anglo-Saxon in the phrasing and choice of words, relieved the burden of argument in the loftier passages by bold imagery draped in the language of the master poets,—Milton above all,—of whom Webster showed himself a close student,* without the slightest appearance of pedantry; not only quoting, as he might, a couplet, so as to be brief, but so transfusing the substance of immortal verse into the diction of his own speech that a prose utterance rang out with the music of a sublime harmony. Of statesmen no one but Burke has left speeches so worthy of rank among the English prose classics; and while Burke, as tradition tells us, rose too often above those he addressed and got tedious, Webster spoke to the time and occasion, and carried his audience to the close. The views which Webster announced were of the broad and elevating kind; and instead of picking an adversary's speech to pieces he preferred to set forth the main facts and principles as he viewed them, and rest his argument upon vital and essential points, which the luminous process of his mind enabled him to discover and set apart. If there was art in all this, he was discreet enough to conceal it, and no one opposed to him could complain that he was utterly uncandid, still less uncivil. To crown all, Webster's overpowering presence and manner, as every American knows, gave weight to the commonest remark

* With all that has been written of Webster's oratory, none appear to have observed how much of his eloquence was kindled by the study of "Paradise Lost," that armory of choice English expression. Of quotations most readily occurring, we may recall these from his most famous orations:

"——another morn
Risen on mid-noon."

"——all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds."

Compare also the striking peroration in the reply to Hayne, "the gorgeous ensign of the republic, still full high advanced," etc., with "Paradise Lost," Book I. Shakespeare supplied Webster with thoughts and passages to quote from; Pope, also, whose majestic flow of verse he well appreciated.

which might escape his lips, and deepened immeasurably the effect of an eloquence which surely needed the aid of no meretricious trick or illusion. To this grave, swarthy, massive, and majestic lion of a man, who moved among a thousand with an easy consciousness of superiority, mental and physical, and who, in the plentitude of his powers, could not stop before a shop-window without drawing a crowd to gaze, awe-stricken, upon him, the epithets "Olympian," "god-like" were freely applied, and with the most obvious aptitude. Had he stood in the market square, raised an arm, and frozen into silence, his erect figure would have been accepted as the bronze ideal of statesman and defender of the constitution. Clay's agile craft seemed light in comparison when this great American man-of-war bore down, full rigged, before the wind, with spreading sail and ponderous tonnage, crowding all canvas, and flying the stars and stripes fearlessly at the fore. Those stars and stripes were very dear to Webster, for love of the Union gave the best inspiration to his public career. He was in every fibre an American patriot; and entering public life in the service of the United States, on that broad altar, to use his own expression, did he dedicate himself. In temperament he was conservative, like the Massachusetts of that day, and of that juridical type, moreover, which would keep liberty closely protected by law. His whole soul abhorred radical and violent change; nevertheless he progressed. That government is based upon property was, as he asserted, a fundamental maxim;* and to benefit property and increase the general wealth and prosperity of the nation constituted perhaps the chief scope of his long statesmanship.

Webster inclined naturally to indolence. But his aspirations were noble, and when aroused his native energy

* See Plymouth oration, 1820; also Massachusetts Convention, *supra*. This assertion was used in later years to Webster's prejudice. He put forward the idea, perhaps, with stronger emphasis than he otherwise would have done, to save the State constitution from the amendments at that time proposed in connection with the legislature.

carried him along with great celerity. Gifted with a broad analytic mind which acquired rapidly, grasped principles, and sifted all details, he treasured all that was worth remembering; and what he knew he could tell clearly, without risking himself to tell more or venturing beyond his depth. Like other great lawyers he not only could investigate by the best means when the point arose, but understood perfectly how to absorb the labors of other men. Love of nature and rural sports enriched his personal experience of life, which was great and varied; and carrying, as he wandered on some lonely excursion through the woods, the secret habit of composition, he would, pole in hand, arrange the order of some new oration, or address an eloquent passage to the trout which he jerked out of the brook. Some of his greatest speeches, which seemed to spring from the brain in full panoply, were constructed from memoranda composed in leisure moments and then laid aside.

He was bred and born a Puritan Federalist; and his politics showed always the peculiar training of that school, which, in Boston especially, had a decided tinge of Anglicism. To Gore and other leaders of that party who had befriended his youth Webster owned a personal obligation; but he rose superior to the ancient bigotry, and Jefferson, to whom he paid a visit about this time, spoke with high praise of him.* Webster had come to Congress once more thoroughly independent in politics; a middleman, so to speak; and in the present disordered condition of parties and principles, he easily made himself felt. As among Presidential candidates, he first inclined, as it would seem, to Crawford; for towards John Quincy Adams, his own fellow-citizen, he felt, in truth, very little of a personal yearning. Perhaps he had imbibed something of the old school antipathy; though certainly no such rancorous hatred as that of Pickering, whose aged hand launched a javelin this very hour at the hoary head of John Adams,

* See Monroe MSS.

as though to wound the son by striking down the father.* In New England the Secretary of State stood first, Webster second, in point of public influence; and Webster's way was already clear to reversing that order. It was Clay to whom Webster, from force of sympathy, now tended; aiding well that popular champion on the Cumberland road question at this date, though opposing him on the tariff; and claiming in the broadest spirit that Congress ought not to balance State interests apart, but to act for the benefit of all the States united. Webster's main concern, however, was with his own committee. Aided by Judge Story, he prepared a new crimes act, since famous as the act of 1825, and carried it ably through the present Congress.† An effort he made to increase the judiciary proved less successful; for though his influence held the House to his views, his bill failed in the Senate.‡

On one theme the two orators were in perfect accord. It was a popular one, and the enthusiasm it aroused in and out of Congress showed how responsive was the beat of the national heart both to eloquence and the sufferings of the world's toilers for liberty. Greece struggled with the Turkish oppressor, and solicited of the United States recognition, alliance, and assistance. There seemed for the moment a renaissance of the demigods; Ulysses, commander of the Macedonians, from the high encampment on Mount Olympus, summoned his countrymen to freedom, and a victory was won at the pass of Thermopylæ. Meetings were called in our northern cities on behalf of these patriots, subscriptions raised, expressions of sympathy fervently tendered; American scholarship was aroused, and in these days when scholars spoke the people reverently listened. While the classic spirit kindled at the Promethean spark Webster introduced a resolution in the House pro-

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* See Cunningham Correspondence; and see J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1823; Jefferson's letter to Van Buren in Jefferson's Works, 1824.

† Act March 3, 1825.

‡ Annals of Congress; see also Lodge's Webster.

viding for the appointment of an agent or commissioner to Greece whenever the President should deem it expedient; * and eloquent speeches followed in its favor from both Webster and Clay, as though by pre-arrangement. But it was possible to carry this zeal for Greece too far. Had not the President officially announced the complete separation in policy of the two hemispheres? And was it not madness in the present aspect of affairs, when nerve enough was needful to keep up a bold front against the Holy Alliance, to provoke the Turk and become quixotic meddlers with the European balance of power? Monroe had dismissed the subject with kind words for the patriots; while Secretary Adams stood so stiffly for neutrality on this question that he refused to subscribe a dollar to the Greek fund lest his official motives should be misconstrued. Of all men in Congress, John Randolph came forward to relieve the administration of embarrassment; and put on his mettle by oratory such as the House had not heard for many a day, he opposed the resolution in a speech full of sense and sarcasm. It was one of the last efforts really worthy of him. Webster was voted down. There was sympathy and compassion still for unhappy Greece, but not of the uncalculating kind. Yet the ardor which that cause inspired in the English-speaking race throbs in the passionate verse of Byron and Campbell; among American poets, Halleck and Percival felt the flame; and of three distinct types of our Congressional oratory, no better specimens to this day can be found than in the several speeches which Clay, Webster, and Randolph delivered in the winter of 1823–24 on the spur of the Webster resolution.†

1823. Dec. 5.

1824. Jan.

* Adams, in his Diary, intimates that this was a milder form of expression than some who were ready to intermeddle with the Executive desired; and in fact that this very proposal to leave the Executive to his discretion helped defeat the measure.

† See 25 Niles's Register; Annals of Congress. As to whether Webster or Clay was really the originator of the proposal to send a minister to Greece, compare Lodge's Webster and Adams's Diary, which appear to be somewhat at variance.

1823-24. The reader must not imagine that this first session closed without much plotting for the Presidential election. Indeed, the "great question," as Clay would style it in his private letters, was abundantly discussed; but as if under a whisper, and more decently, we may feel sure, than in the previous Congress. All of the leading candidates, Crawford, Adams, Jackson, Calhoun, Clay, were at the capital throughout the winter, where each could watch the game and confer with his followers. Even De Witt Clinton, for the time an ex-governor, hovered about the lobbies. There were runners to and fro. The air of Washington was thick with rumors of plots, counter-plots and alliances. But rival candidates were persistent; and the prospect grew of an ultimate choice by the House, no candidate carrying a majority of the electors; in which turn of the cards, to be among the three highest was of prime consequence.

Never since 1800, if at all, had the electoral machinery of each State been so thoroughly looked into, or the calculus of the vote arranged with so nice a mathematical exactness. But the disturbing influences were still great. First of all, Crawford's lead weakened. His move was to be the regular nominee of the party. But under the double burden he bore, his giant frame gave way in the summer of 1823, stricken by paralysis. He retired to a mansion house in the country, where only those in his strict confidence could visit him.* He took no part in the cabinet conferences upon the "Monroe doctrine." When Congress met he lay very low, exhausted by copious bleeding, the wreck of his former self. His general debility had produced an affection of the eyes, so painful that he was often bandaged and kept in a dark room, and his physicians feared total blindness. Though quite incapacitated for work Monroe permitted him to remain, his department carried on for a year or more by a

* This "mansion in the country" was on the corner of 14th Street and Massachusetts Avenue. Sargent's Public Men.

clerk,* and his official signature placed upon documents by a fac-simile stamp pressed by his direction under his daughter's hand. While friends, anxious enough in private council, made light of his disability before the public, his enemies exaggerated it, or rather made him out quite as ill as he really was.

But Crawford would not give up the chase, and his managers helped him on as they might. They failed, and badly, too, in the first stroke of hand; which was to gather into a Congressional caucus the body of Republican members and set their candidate before the people with what had been thought in other days of great consequence, a caucus nomination. Naturally enough the friends of all the other candidates, themselves of the same party with Crawford himself, so far as there were parties left at all, combined against that test of preference. Caucus and anti-caucus notices appeared in print together. Sixty-six members out of two hundred and sixty-one met by candle light February 14th in the Representatives' Chamber at the hour appointed; gathered exclusively in the interest of a single faction, as a single ballot showed; for all present agreed in presenting the names of Crawford and Gallatin for President and Vice-President. Republicans of the United States were solemnly adjured to preserve the proud party founded by Jefferson by supporting these nominations, and not suffer it to be dismembered.† But the Congressional caucus, like the Republican party itself, had run its appointed course; and this was the last of Presidential nominations at the Capitol. 1824. Feb. 14.

In the present state of public sentiment the rapid rise of Jackson and his candidacy made a second disturbing influence in the calculations of those who had hitherto led in political affairs. Adams interpreted the signs of the times, and thought to hitch the new star to his chariot. On the battle anniversary of 1824 he gave a brilliant ball

* Asbury Dickins of North Carolina, afterwards Secretary of the Senate.

† 25 Niles's Register.

to the hero of New Orleans, which the President, as in honor bound, excused himself from attending; a great crowd gathered, a thousand or more, and joy ruled the hour.* Little reward did Jackson ever render for such constant service as the Secretary had rendered him. To Adams's wish that "Adams and Jackson" should be the winning card we have already alluded; and the Diary shows that he pressed this programme upon his own friends till it was plain folly to do so longer. The trained civilian had never dreamed how hotly emulous of first honors was this battered veteran, of hearty manners and ungrammatical, often profane, speech, who had long laughed over his pipe at the absurdity of being run for so exalted an office; yet who accepted the nomination, after his State had tendered it, in a letter which was admirably framed for making his election sure.† Adams, nearly as old as he, had gone through the whole gamut of court and cabinet experience, and was a consummate statesman in all points but that of executive responsibility. Humane in his conceptions, he had lately proposed changes in the law of nations, which, if adopted, would have abolished privateering and greatly assuaged the ills of war.‡ How was it possible for him to play second to any crude warrior? But the youthful Calhoun, not less clear-sighted and far more nimble, consented at the lucky moment that the hero should precede him. In a word, while all the other rivals watched keenly the first prize, he snapped at the second and bore it off in triumph. One strong alliance he cemented by doing so, and yet did not debar himself from making a different one hereafter should events take another turn. The weakest candidate was thus swept aside. As for the next weakest, Clay, not a little sore that

* See Adams's Diary, January, 1824.

† Jackson's letter of acceptance, February 23, 1823, embodied the idea that the Presidency is an office neither to be sought nor declined *when offered by those who have the power of selection.* Of all the candidates he stood the most unequivocally upon anti-caucus ground.

‡ J. Q. Adams's Diary, July, 1823. That the United States refused its assent to such changes when proposed in 1856 by the treaty of Paris is matter of later history.

Virginia should stand so compactly for Crawford, when he, too, was Virginia born, concluded to persevere; for there were contingencies in the canvass that might yet turn the scale in his favor.*

A curious disclosure of the session had been that of the "A. B." plot, so called, whose design was to break down Crawford by accusing him of malfeasance in office. Ninian Edwards, a Senator of Illinois, was appointed and confirmed to the Mexican mission. Few suspected him of the authorship of some anonymous letters which had appeared over the initials "A. B." in a Washington newspaper reflecting upon the integrity of the Secretary of the Treasury; and all were surprised when a letter to the Speaker of the House, which he dispatched while on the way to his post, avowed the authorship boldly and submitted new accusations containing matter of impeachment and asking an investigation ordered. The singular part of it was that one should have presented such charges while hastening on a foreign mission with all speed. Crawford's friends did not shrink from the inquiry. The House dispatched the sergeant-at-arms; Edwards was overtaken fifteen hundred miles from Washington and brought back. He failed to sustain the charges, and Crawford was exonerated; though so anxious were Crawford's friends to have him vindicated before the Presidential election that some minor points were hurriedly passed over. Public opinion bore hardly upon Edwards, whose time and method of accusation were, to say the least, ill chosen. He resigned the mission; and an affair ended which to Monroe, considering his delicate relations with Crawford and the good faith in which the appointment had been made, was one of the most painful of his whole public life.† 1824. January–March.

* See Clay's Private Correspondence, 1824. One plan was to get Crawford to withdraw and then support Clay. This, if entertained, did not work, but Clay hoped for a gain in his favor in some way should Crawford be put *hors de combat.* J. Q. Adams's Diary, May, 1824.

† See Monroe MSS.; 1 Benton's Thirty Years' View; Annals of Congress; 26, 27 Niles's Register; 6 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs. This whole

The States whose legislatures had taken ground in favor of nominating by the old plan of a Congressional caucus—Virginia, New York, Maine, and Georgia—appealed to tradition, to party pride, to the necessity of preserving the Republican ranks unbroken against the adversary. But there was no adversary, no party; and as for traditions, the legitimate province of the caucus had been confined to pending measures of legislation. Never had a Republican caucus, in truth, assumed to select as among coequal candidates. It had nearly blundered in 1816; but then and in every other instance it did no more than register a nomination already pronounced by the general voice of the party. This caucus system itself, as a national one, grew out of earlier contentions between the two great political parties of the Union, which in the days of Hamilton and Jefferson divided our people into two evenly balanced parties; though one might further trace its origin through the Continental Congress and colonial legislatures back to the British Parliament and the Whig and Tory strifes of 1688. Its prime object was concert in principles and a policy; its secondary, accord as to men for the sake of those principles and that policy. Under a constitution like ours, which made the divorce of Executive and Legislature a cardinal feature and apportioned electors among the States, for Congress to dictate Presidential candidates was radically wrong. But what should be the substitute? Tennessee, the State at this time con-

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story is narrated by Benton. The most important member of the investigating committee was Webster. Crawford's answer to the charges preferred against him was prepared, in his illness, by his clerk, who was cognizant of the transactions in question and read over to the accused what he had written.

The "A. B." letters had been published in the "Republican," which, as we have seen, Calhoun established in his own political interest. After two years of persevering warfare upon the Treasury and its head, that press now suddenly collapsed; but so offensively hostile was the "National Intelligencer" by this time to all of the administration excepting Crawford, not sparing even the President, although hitherto in some sense an organ of the government, that a rival official paper was started, the "National Journal."

spicuous in presenting a popular candidate, was foremost, too, in dissenting from the caucus and appealing to more popular methods of nomination. Its legislature had given Jackson a first sanction, whereupon Kentucky recommended Clay, and, less formally, Massachusetts presented Adams. Various States followed with an indorsement of one candidate or another. But this method, not for the first time pursued, brought out favorite sons far too many; how to harmonize preferences was still the question. The Tennessee impulse was felt by Pennsylvania, whose democracy, now for the first time shaking off Virginia, proclaimed loudly their resolve never to surrender the right of choice to any self-constituted agency of men. Young men formed into "hickory clubs." Town and county meetings pronounced for Jackson and protested against ring dictation in the same breath. As early as January members of the Pennsylvania delegation in Congress were seen broaching the plan of a national convention, and this plan they urged their State to take the lead in recommending.* They were too early with the suggestion. Time was needful and a better opportunity before so vast a political engine could be brought into play. Yet the Pennsylvania democracy moved unswervingly in the direction of popular nominations; and at a State convention held in Harrisburg on the 4th of March Jackson was nominated by acclamation for President, and Calhoun, by a large majority, for Vice-President; John Andrew Shulze being by this time Governor of the State.† In the Philadelphia meeting which chose delegates to this convention, George M. Dallas, a rising young politician, and a son of Crawford's predecessor in the Treasury, had, in a speech flattering to the people, announced Calhoun's final waiver of all claim to the first honors.

1824. January.

March.

* See 25 Niles's Register, 306, January, 1824.

† Federalists of the State had held convention at Harrisburg somewhat earlier, February 22, 1824, nominating Jackson for President. Sargent's Public Men and Events.

This Harrisburg demonstration, which furnished a positive instance of the State nominating convention as detached from a State legislative caucus, the Crawford men, or radical democrats, as they called themselves, denounced as political treason to the party. They called their own convention at Harrisburg on the 9th of August, and in emphatic terms repudiated the chieftain, "unfit to be President" and "no Republican," and resolved to adhere to "the true democratic candidate, Mr. Crawford." *

August.

Dallas was Calhoun's personal friend. How far Calhoun's nomination in Pennsylvania committed him to Jackson's support was not then known. Calhoun kept up his popularity in New England, and, so far as he might, his perishing friendship with New England's candidate. Adams himself having put forth no one but Jackson for Vice-President, the votes reverted naturally to Jackson's friend under the circumstances. At every fresh stage of the canvass the general's own prospects brightened. Every breeze seemed to puff his bark forward. Curiosity was whetted to good purpose. A letter drawn out from him upon the tariff question, and made public at this time, announced him in plain but emphatic terms a fair-minded protectionist.† This pleased Pennsylvania, and could give no great offence elsewhere. His remarkable correspondence with Monroe in 1816–17, which had never before seen the light, also came out in print,‡ and produced a far wider sensation, winning to his support a large and respectable class of Federal antecedents having votes and State influ-

* See 26 Niles's Register; Sargent's Public Men and Events.

† See Jackson's April letter to Coleman; 26 Niles's Register, 245.

‡ See *supra*, p. 4; 26 Niles's Register, 162–166, May 18, 1824. By a strange fatuity it seems to have been the Crawford men and Jackson's enemies who caused this correspondence to be published. One of these letters having come into their hands, by which they hoped to show that he was no Republican, Jackson, with the President's permission, brought out all to justify himself. See Sumner's Jackson, where it is suggested that Jackson had been used to advance some intrigue in 1816 for putting a South Carolina Federalist into the cabinet.

ence at command, who seemed somehow to have been left out of the national offices in spite of all "good feeling," and whose cause this most partisan of leaders, when his own time came, was seen pressing for some mysterious reason upon the most unpartisan. No letters ever written which bear Jackson's signature have so far away a look as these. Of little consequence in 1816, they seemed expressly written for the popular candidate of 1824; nor is it easy to say where the smoothing process which his secretaries so often applied began or ended in this instance, though for striking ideas and vigorous terms of expression, Jackson, it is just to add, stood little in need of another's assistance. How happy the plea to "exterminate that monster called party spirit!" And yet how severe upon traitors that other declaration, that had he commanded where the Hartford Convention met, he would have court-martialled its leaders. Loyal Federalism, in a word, was nicked between wind and water. The best trained politician of three generations could not have made a cleaner shot.

Congress rose in May, while the contest was becoming feverish. Every candidate had his friends, who called town and county meetings to pass resolutions of support. Votes were polled on steamboats, among grand juries, at tariff gatherings, to see which name was the favorite. Ready-made vests were imported from France, each wrought up with its picture, that the customer might select a Jackson, an Adams, or a Clay one. As the battle array was now turning, New York and Pennsylvania were seen to be the pivot States. Of Crawford's party Richmond seemed the directing centre; but the Albany Regency, under Van Buren's lead, had the most audacious enterprise to execute. In seventeen States by 1824 electors were chosen by the people, and in ten of them a general ticket was submitted. The district system of choosing electors, though perhaps more equitable, was going rapidly out of favor, for State pride was best gratified by the other method. At the present day only a scholar

1824. May 27.

reflects how easily the electoral vote of a State might be divided in either case, if electors voted with the personal freedom which the framers of our constitution intended. In this canvass it was still an item of calculation with party managers. There were at least seven States in 1823 where the legislature chose electors, and not the people at all; and one of these seven was the great State of New York. Crawford had no such popular strength as to have carried that State by the general suffrage of its voters, nor probably in any legislature fresh from the people; but under the existing State law the legal right of selecting Presidential electors belonged to a legislature chosen a twelvemonth earlier, and to that right Van Buren clung tenaciously. The Clinton wing, the great mass of voters, demanded of the legislature a new law, which should give the choice of electors to the people, but the Tammany democracy was inflexible. Yates, the governor, who was fair-minded, took the popular side, so the Regency dropped him for a re-election, and put up Samuel Young instead. Pushing discipline a step too far, the party which controlled the legislature removed Clinton from his office of canal commissioner, the honor of all honors which was rightfully his own. Clinton's fellow-citizens took his cause into their own hands. Immediately put in nomination for Governor, he was elected over Young in November by 16,000 majority. Serene, though defeat impended, Van Buren perseveringly kept the legislature—or rather the Senate, for here was the obstinate majority—to its purpose. Governor Yates had convened an extra session of the legislature, to compel, if possible, the passage of a bill giving the choice of electors to the people; but in vain. Seventeen Senators took the odium of thwarting the clear wishes of the people on this point. The rebuke of the Regency in the State election and Clinton's return to power produced a panic in this legislature. Van Buren had strained its obstinacy too far. While he planned a coalition of the Crawford and Clay interests, and thought his main point secure, his friends in the legislature suddenly

April.

November.

August.

September.

broke, and the electoral votes were scattered, Adams receiving the greater part of them.*

In Pennsylvania, during this same canvass, a last November. vain effort had been made to stem with the names of Crawford and Clay the rising popularity of the Jackson and Calhoun ticket. Gallatin, it has been shown, returned from Europe in 1823, at the very moment, in fact, when French relations grew critical, and was placed by the Congressional caucus upon the Crawford ticket as Vice-President. Crawford, indeed, had early bespoken Gallatin's support; so Gallatin came home to take part in the canvass, proposing to himself the very delicate task of bringing Pennsylvania into line and suppressing its fierce and unruly democracy.† An old school ticket was that of Crawford and Gallatin; appealing to party tradition and doubtless respectable. But for youth and the new era it had little of attracting power; nor could Gallatin impart to it the peculiar strength which was needful and anticipated. This old man of nut-brown complexion, with keen eye and face locked up like a money-box, though commanding instant respect for his wisdom, was quite outside the common range of American thought and sympathy, and could not for a moment divert the people from their idols. Touching port after a ten years' absence,—ten years of crowded events,—he had

* Clinton's influence possibly operated to this result. The legislature dared not give the electoral vote to Crawford in defiance of the strong popular expression. Letters to Clay from New York intimated as much; and, moreover (for rumor had it that Van Buren had undertaken to sell out the State and its entire electoral vote to Crawford), that a mutual distrust had been spreading that each was trying to bag the other's game. See Clay's Private Correspondence; also 26, 27 Niles's Register.

† See 2 Gallatin's Works. Crawford, in June, 1822, and later, held out the successorship to Cheves in the affairs of the National Bank, as a present inducement, intimating that the office of Governor of Pennsylvania may be later at his disposal. By May, 1823, hearing that the administration would probably wish him to remain at Paris, Crawford wrote quite excitedly for Gallatin to come home in any case. Gallatin had already anticipated this last advice, for he returned to the United States in the spring of 1823 on a leave of absence. He declined to go back, and insisted upon resigning his mission. See Monroe MSS.; Adams's Diary, 1823.

scarcely a legal domicile in the State he still called his own, and at heart felt scarcely less an alien than when he first set foot on the western shore. He had studied into Europe and its diplomacy, could discourse finance with Baring, and science with Humboldt; but he knew not the America of 1823, nor did this America know him. Nearly all he had learned of our politics for the past ten years came through Crawford, who had long been his favorite for the Presidency. With Adams and Clay he could claim acquaintance, but Calhoun seemed still a youth, and Jackson had wholly risen during his stay abroad. Towards Monroe and his administration his attitude had constantly been neutral. Gallatin, in a word, was eminently wise, learned, clear-headed at this time of life, but prudent and selfish instincts had been crowding his affections. Though Republican still, he had lost the fervor which once upheld principles through persecution, nor could he accept in its stead that shallow zeal which contends for orthodoxy as though party lines were forever indelible. Politics was a lottery, a game for personal preferment, as Gallatin seems at length to have viewed it. Naturally reticent, he was shrinking at mature life into one of those characters who avoid committing themselves to writing and say little lest they should say too much. Beyond some sharp criticism of Crawford's rivals, there was little Gallatin did, or could do, to show himself abreast with the times. To please Crawford's managers he tried his power of persuasion upon Macon and Jefferson; but he could neither draw the one into caucus nor the other out of his friendly posture of neutrality. What with Crawford prostrated by sickness and Pennsylvania Jackson-mad, Gallatin found it impossible to do what had been expected of him. Lowrie, Van Buren, and the other Crawford managers conferred; and the plan agreed upon was to drop Gallatin and run Clay for Vice-President. Clay was sounded as to such an ar-

1824. rangement, and his answer, though coy, was not discouraging. It was now late in September; Lowrie informed Gallatin of the new coalition and politely asked

him to step aside; somewhat crestfallen, Gallatin did so. His withdrawal, publicly announced, gave rise to various rumors. Gallatin was too sagacious not to see for himself that his nomination was a mistake, founded upon a miscalculation of his political strength in his own State; and if there could be any consolation in knowing that this change of front in face of the enemy could not save Crawford's cause, he found it.* October. November.

Truly is it said that angels in the form of men have not descended to govern us. But while the old Republican ship was thus seen going to pieces in a calm sea, the hulk of Federalism having already been swallowed up, our people saw the wreck from the shore with no apprehension of danger. And now was blown the uplifted trumpet, summoning them to renew once more in serried ranks and multitudes the mutual vow of fidelity to the Union and to one another, and in their present blessings commemorate the sacrifices of the past. They gathered heartily at the sound; and the era of patriotic feeling ended, as it had begun, in a national tour. The first tour was Monroe's, the last Lafayette's.

Lafayette's final visit to the United States in 1824 was in two aspects most remarkable. A venerated hero returned, after full forty years' absence, to see our prosperous nation enjoying in solid peace that independence in whose cause, when erst he stood on this soil, his sword and ours were together drawn. And this hero was himself a foreign nobleman; one who in youth had so generously given of his treasures and his blood to the American people as to seem an American by adoption, and who yet became afterward identified, in the prime of manhood, with the cause of liberty in his own native land; the conspicuous, perhaps the only, revolutionary leader of France of those times whose record left nothing to blush

* See Clay's Private Correspondence; 2 Gallatin's Works; 27 Niles's Register, 113.

for. A guest like this no nation was ever likely to entertain a second time. The splendor of Lafayette's later reputation in the old world heightened his earlier renown in the new. His whole long life had been consecrated to human rights. Republicanism itself entered the nobility when one of title so illustrious could be claimed as friend and father.

No wonder, then, that on Lafayette's return to the United States after so long an absence—a return sudden enough to test the strength of a spontaneous welcome—the heart of this whole people should have poured out in salutation. To use Clay's felicitous expression, it seemed a realization of that vain wish that the patriot father might revisit his country after death, and contemplate the immediate changes which time had wrought. But even that figure of speech was inadequate; for the man who now revisited America and stood in the midst of posterity was not like the risen dead, but rather some long absent champion, who, leaving America free, had gone out to liberate new worlds; there had been no grave, no oblivion to close over the patriot in this instance, but the bond of sympathy which united this people and their benefactor had remained unbroken. Seas had divided, but absence made hearts fonder.

The season of Lafayette's arrival, as the reader may well have gathered from our narrative, was highly propitious for thus pledging anew this most precious of international friendships. Confidence was felt at home and abroad in the permanency of American institutions. The United States and Europe had been forever sundered. Present prosperity and the remembrance of dangers past served most of all to endear the recollections of the great founders of this republic, their sufferings and sacrifices. The memories of '76 were peculiarly tender. Children refused to nourish the old party feuds of their parents; we had ceased to be partisans of either England or France. Those leading spirits of the late momentous half century of war, rancor, and bloodshed were disappearing. George

III. and Bonaparte had recently died, within a few months of one another. The few survivors of American independence who lingered on the scene inspired reverence, but they had ceased to participate actively in affairs. Travellers made a pious pilgrimage to Washington's brick tomb; or visited the houses of Adams and Jefferson, marvelling at the simplicity with which an American "ex-monarch" could live, the one in the rustic routine of his little farm at Braintree, where his playful banter kept all at his table in good humor, the other, with perhaps more constant fire and vivacity of conversation, at airy Monticello. All this was the reverent tribute of the present to the past. Monroe was of necessity the last President of the United States identified with the Revolutionary epoch. And Lafayette himself, once the young companion of Washington, had now become the sole surviving general officer of Washington's immortal army.

In honoring Lafayette thus publicly our government appears to have irritated, willingly enough though not purposely, the Bourbon family that once more (for a brief spell, as events proved) occupied the throne of France. Congress, at the same session, in fact, which opened with Monroe's startling warning to the Holy Alliance, passed a resolution complimentary to Lafayette, which, in view of his intended visit, authorized a national ship to bring him over. Our new minister to France, James Brown, bore to Lafayette almost simultaneously an autograph letter from the President which made a like offer, and assured the marquis of the sincere attachment of the whole American nation, and their ardent desire to see him once more in the United States.* So marked a civility under the circumstances was a clear stroke of policy. Lafayette's star had risen and sunk repeatedly with the vicissitudes of France, and the time now approached when this veteran soldier of conservative freedom would once more be worthily trusted by his countrymen. But loyal to the principles he had

* See Resolution Feb. 4, 1822; Monroe MSS.

always maintained, Lafayette had of late incurred the displeasure of Louis XVIII. by speeches which opposed the royal policy in the French chamber of deputies. He was excluded in consequence from representation; that exclusion left him free to accept an invitation to America, and accordingly he came.

The general impression has been that Lafayette's visit to the United States was naturally intended for his pleasure and the public gratification; perhaps, too, as in some sort a demonstration against the Holy Alliance, but for nothing more. This impression is not strictly correct. True, there was no special significance attached to this tour, though that idea some Frenchmen entertained at the time, imagining some plan of conquest was on foot in which he was to bear a part. True, too, that Lafayette's long cherished wish to revisit the scenes of his youthful exploits had of late been constantly reciprocated by the American press and his private American correspondents. But in the present instance our administration was tacitly pledged to bestow upon the last of illustrious Revolutionary leaders some tangible proof of the public gratitude, such as he plainly had good reason to demand. Lafayette was far from affluent just now; and the loss of royal favor at home involved to one of his rank a pecuniary sacrifice. He, a stranger to these colonies, and owing us nothing, had in our hour of peril expended from his own means, sacrificed his ease, shed his blood, and risked his life in our service. As a Revolutionary officer, he was entitled to public lands; and having, in fact, received a specific grant from Congress at the annexation of Louisiana, the location made by his agent in that territory near New Orleans proved quite recently to be in conflict with some earlier grants.* Respecting that claim Lafayette had corresponded with Edward Livingston, who understood the embarrassments which had arisen, and on his present re-en-

* U. S. Stats. at Large, vol. ii, 236, 305, 329, 394, 664; acts 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1811; also vol. v, 729, act of 1845.

trance to the House made an eloquent speech to commemorate the marquis's services. President Monroe and men prominent in influence with his administration, learning the true state of Lafayette's private purse, encouraged him strongly in the half-formed purpose of coming to this country, at the same time keeping the matter of his claim delicately in the background.*

Lafayette declined the honor of a public ship. And sailing modestly in the packet from Havre, accompanied by his son George, also by Lavasseur, his private secretary, he reached New York on the 15th of August. Little did he anticipate the arrangements prepared for his reception; for all had been arranged so as to give him a surprise. And thus was it that returning to America in the modest expectation of, perhaps, honorable attentions, he found on his first landing a whole community's gratitude to be his welcome. Where, indeed, could one better be than in the bosom of a family like this? So astonished was he, so overcome, to find himself a public guest, in the midst of holiday rejoicings, where he had expected to land quietly and engage private lodgings, that his eyes flowed with tears, and violently pressing both hands to his heart, he exclaimed, "It will burst!" But the same demonstrations which greeted Lafayette on his arrival at New York were exhibited wherever else he went.

Lafayette's tour lasted for the remainder of Monroe's term and for a few months beyond it. In the course of some fourteen months he traversed the whole country, visiting every State in the Union and all the leading cities, many of them repeatedly, and received everywhere the same sincere tokens of reverence and affection, differing, however, sometimes in characteristic expression. At classic

* See Monroe MSS., 1824; also J. Q. Adams's Memoirs. Lafayette had to raise money from his friends to come over. And Jefferson in his letter to Monroe, Feb. 5, 1824, expresses the hope that Congress is prepared to go through with their compliment worthily; that they will not merely dine him, nor send him back empty-handed; for this would place us in indelible disgrace in Europe.

Cambridge he drank in the entrancing music of Everett's voice, which spoke the first of truly eloquent welcomes. A fairy ball was given by moonlight at Castle Garden, where six thousand guests, embracing the whole social range of the lively metropolis, danced and promenaded in his honor, or from the ramparts looked down complacently upon a scene of surpassing romance. In the course of his travels through the Atlantic and Southern States, up the Mississippi and Ohio, across New York and Massachusetts, and then south again, every means of conveyance then known, from a barouche to a canal-boat, received him; here huge processions escorted him to his lodgings, and there he would sit good-humoredly over a camp-fire in the backwoods, and spread his blanket among such Indians or rough pioneers as he chanced to encounter. Wherever Lafayette might go, the nation's guest was felt to be the people's friend; hospitality and delicate treatment never failed. With governors and the most distinguished of local characters to perform the public honors of each occasion, the great body of American citizens constituted themselves his host. They took Lafayette into their own keeping, carried him from place to place, and feasted and applauded him as long as he would remain. The wish, repeatedly expressed and cheered in the course of his visit, was that he would become in reality an American citizen and end his days here.

What a wild fire of enthusiasm was aroused by Lafayette's visit a new age cannot easily picture. By October the Presidential question was almost merged (so Jefferson wrote to Rush), and nothing scarcely was said of it by the press. A portrait of Lafayette, stamped upon blue ribbon, and known as the "Lafayette badge," was the usual decoration displayed in a city or town on his approach. Everett's early salutation, "Welcome, Lafayette," was that inscribed upon many hundred arches through which the hero passed. Emblems and orations recalled Revolutionary scenes in which he and Washington had participated. The model of a ship greeted the man who had just declined a public vessel; it bore the memorable offer of his youth, "I will purchase and

equip a vessel at my own expense." The tricolor and the stars and stripes were once more seen intertwined, though not with the dangerous familiarity of '93. Nothing could have expressed the universal impulse more admirably than a ringing stanza in the ode of Sprague, which ended with this couplet:

> "We bow not the neck and we bend not the knee,
> But our hearts, Lafayette, we surrender to thee."

For it was indeed a surrender of hearts; and that, too, at a crisis when the slightest tribute to a noble European ought not, it was felt, to be misinterpreted.

If Lafayette's appearance somewhat surprised, he did not long disappoint the spectator. He presented a fine, portly figure, nearly six feet high; his weight of years was lightly worn, and his only apparent infirmity was a slight lameness, resulting from his old wound at Brandywine. That lithe, graceful youth, with elastic step and beaming face, whose bronze image is familiar to many Americans of this later day, had indeed vanished; yet Lafayette's appearance astonished by its vigorous contrast with those bent and gray-haired veterans who saluted him as their compatriot. This was partly the effect of French art; though more was owing to Lafayette's French vivacity and perennial good nature. Looking closely upon his face, one saw traces of his sufferings; and Quincy tells us that the brown wig, which set low upon his forehead, concealing some of his wrinkles, did yeoman's service to one who rode so constantly in an open carriage, bowing with uncovered head. The old Indian chief, Red Jacket, who had been with Lafayette in 1784, expressed a rueful amazement that time, which had dealt hardly by himself, should have left the general so fresh a countenance and so hairy a scalp. We must remember, too, that Lafayette's American renown came to him remarkably early in life. He was scarcely twenty years of age when he bore to Washington his major-general's commission, a commission which Congress had conferred as an honorary distinction upon a

titled foreigner, but which he insisted upon making the credential of active service.

Lafayette's manner was full of responsive warmth, whatever the attention shown him; and his constant tact and good breeding and kindness of heart made entertainment so easy that love at once filled the place prepared for awe. Here he saw that every one had his pursuit in life, so that many plain people who accosted him seemed curious to know whether he was truly a farmer of La Grange or how else he supported himself. More than once he observed chief rulers and high dignitaries travelling without peculiar distinction; a high cabinet officer and candidate for the Presidency preparing his bed upon the saloon floor of a crowded steamboat; the governor of a State pulling in a skiff to help unload a sunken vessel; statesmen often seeming to receive social honors as secondary to private citizens. The only time during his whole tour that Lafayette's carriage was stopped for a toll was once when he rode with the President of the United States. But our universal respect for law and order moved him to admiration. It seemed as if the largest crowds that gathered to honor his approach had resolved not to disgrace American institutions in the eyes of their paternal guest. Lafayette's entrance into Philadelphia caused not the slightest disturbance of the peace, though its population of 120,000 souls was augmented by 40,000 strangers who came to take part in the rejoicings. Multitudes huzzaed that day in the streets as the procession passed, and multitudes at night walked the streets for miles to witness the illuminations; and yet there was found no need of increasing the police, nor, as the mayor announced, was a single complaint reported at headquarters the next morning.*

* See 10 Magazine American History, 243. The narrative of Lafayette's memorable tour cannot be set forth at length in the present pages. Its main incidents and the impressions received by Lafayette himself are well preserved in the published journal of Levasseur; and see American newspapers of the day, particularly Niles's Register. The late Josiah Quincy (the younger), in his "Figures of the Past," touches off Lafayette's visits to Boston from memory with admirable felicity of description.

Reaching Washington, where he became the guest of the White House shortly before the re-assembling of Congress in its second and most momentous session, Lafayette lingered most of this present winter in and about the nation's capital. Here and in the neighboring States he received constant attention. Each branch of Congress tendered him a public reception, which, with his unfailing tact, he took heed should have nothing of pomp about it that could provoke offence; and to Clay's speech in the House, which was an admirable one, he responded in an off-hand reply, both graceful and appropriate. Nor was our pledge forgotten that the honor thus paid Lafayette by the American government should not be an empty one. By an act approved in December the sum of $200,000 was voted him, together with a township, to be located in any of the unappropriated public lands; and this was in express consideration of the services and sacrifices he had rendered in the war of the Revolution. This munificent grant passed readily both Houses by a vote nearly unanimous. A joint committee waited upon the marquis with a copy of this act, asking him, in behalf of Congress, to permit the American people to make this partial discharge of the debt they owed him. Taken by surprise though he was, Lafayette could but accept the donation under all the circumstances. Not only did the voice of the nation sustain Congress in this instance, but several of the States—Virginia, New York, and Maryland, for instance—would have added their own largess, had not Lafayette himself refused any further generosity.* 1824. December.

Among so many suitors for the succession, the electoral votes of the various States had gone scattering, as shrewd observers had predicted, and no one was chosen President. Calhoun, to be sure, the only positive candidate for Vice-President, won his office with little difficulty; but no one

* See Levasseur's Journal; Annals of Congress; Act Dec. 28, 1824.

received the majority of votes which was essential to the choice of chief magistrate. Jackson, Adams, and Crawford stood highest in the list, and in the order given; Jackson in fact receiving more electoral votes than any other candidate, as well as the greatest popular vote. For the second time in American history, and the first time under the constitutional amendment of 1804, the choice devolved upon the House; and in the present division of its preferences, Clay, the fourth candidate, had it in his power to decide which one of his three rivals should be the successful one.

For the grave constitutional function now to be exercised, candor must say that Congress prepared with little of real gravity or of scrupulous regard for the people's wish; thus affording a fresh proof of what experience in State elections has since strongly established,—that it is better, far better, to make a plurality choice by the people, after the usual mode of suffrage, at once decisive, rather than call in any umpire at all, or even keep the public mind uneasy by holding another poll. And of all umpires of the kind, a legislature or either of its branches, elected years earlier and about to expire, is least to be trusted. How low the tone of the tribunal which was to select a President from among Jackson, Adams, and Crawford, these three, the reader will sufficiently gather, not from the vague charges of corruption which were flung by the unsuccessful against the successful after all was over, but from the contemporary writings of those against whom such charges were made.

One does not expect to find in a Diary a disclosure of the same mean motives on the writer's part that he attributes freely to his rivals. No diarist, however, more honestly recorded facts for history than John Quincy Adams, nor made his own changeful point of view clearer. To him it was plain that candidates and their friends at Washington were moving to and fro in anxious conference all the long weary weeks. Many members had confidential interviews with him personally, some of which he detailed, but not all. James Barbour sounded him in December to see whether his friends could not be drawn over to Crawford; and this being

impossible, he elicited the Secretary's views, at some length, upon the principles and policy he proposed pursuing. Webster, in early February, tried to pledge him to appoint some Federalist. Never had the diarist been so willing to please men of all shades of politics. Webster, to be sure, asked too much, but at least Federalists would not be proscribed; and to Barbour Adams gave assurance that his ultimate principle would be "conciliation and not collision." But the record of Clay's approaches, personally and through friends, is of chief interest. In December came Wyer to say that he had it from good authority that Clay was well disposed to support Adams, if he could at the same time be useful to himself; and after him Letcher, who was one of Clay's most intimate friends, lodging at the same house, expressed repeatedly the same idea. Letcher, on the first of January, begged earnestly that Adams would have a confidential interview with Clay; and Clay made a like request in person on the same day. Adams assenting, that interview was held on the 9th; and in the course of it, as Adams made entry, Clay declared explicitly that in the question soon to come before the House Adams would be his preference for President.* 1825. January.

On the day preceding this highly important interview, according to the printed dates, Clay wrote in confidence to his friend Francis P. Blair† of Kentucky, that he had

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* See *passim* J. Q. Adams's Diary, Dec. 1824—February, 1825. His account of this most momentous of interviews Adams leaves manifestly unfinished, having, so his editor supposes, intended a full report, which the extreme pressure of business and visits prevented him from completing.

Adams was well aware of the dangerous character of the Letcher overtures. "*Incedo super ignes*" is his tremulous comment in the Diary.

† See Clay's Private Correspondence, January 8, 1825. In this letter Clay gives an amusing account of the courteous and affectionate manner in which the friends of all three candidates had been hanging about him to solicit his vote. But he gives no inkling of the overtures his own friends had been making to Adams. That there had been abundant plying and pulling in Congress by the friends of the several candidates, both at the first and second session, the annals of the times permit no candid man to doubt. There was scarcely a combination conceivable of these various elements which had not been attempted at one stage or another of the contest for two years previous.

concluded to support Adams in preference to either Crawford or Jackson. My friends, he says, incline the same way; believing that their kind wishes towards me would in the end be more likely to be accomplished by so bestowing their votes. "I have, however," he says, "most earnestly entreated them to throw me out of their consideration in bringing their judgments to a final conclusion, and to look and be guided solely by the public good. If I know myself, that alone has determined me." * January 8.

In spite of assurances so gratifying to Adams, Clay's friends still seemed a little shy; Letcher sent Scott of Missouri, who had the vote of that State to cast alone; and Scott pried quite closely into Adams's intentions with respect of Clay and the cabinet.† But when Clay and his Ohio and Kentucky friends announced positively on the 24th that they would support Adams, a storm of excitement ensued at the Capitol. In the *National Intelligencer* appeared a card from Kremer of the Pennsylvania delegation, denouncing that this support was founded upon a corrupt understanding that Adams, when elected, should make Clay his Secretary of State. Clay denied the charge with becoming spirit; at the same time confessing to his friends by letter that if office were tendered him, he should not by any such threats be deterred from accepting it. January.

On the appointed day the two branches convened, the electoral returns were examined, and it was announced that no candidate for President had received the requisite majority of votes. The Senate with- Feb. 9.

* Clay's Private Correspondence, Jan. 1825.

† See Adams's Diary, January 21–22, 1825. Scott, after settling some points of personal interest, announced that he should vote with the other western delegations, though his State would be much displeased with him for doing so; for he was entirely devoted to Clay and hoped he would be a member of the next administration. Adams made an indirect response which Scott seemed to take for assent. He was back the next day to correct any apprehension that he had meant to prescribe conditions or make bargains; and formally gave Adams to understand that he had not quite made up his mind, after all, as to how he should vote.

drew, and the House made the decisive choice. John Quincy Adams was elected on a single ballot, and on the very next day he announced that he should invite Clay to be his Secretary of State.*

Lafayette's presence at Washington had its influence in preventing all indecorous scenes from first to last. Jackson bore his defeat, to all outward appearances, with admirable grace and composure, having during the whole canvass carried himself with more of the presidential manner than any other candidate. At Monroe's drawing-room, on the evening which followed the ballot, he came up to the President-elect, a lady on his arm, and shook hands with him very cordially, his countenance altogether placid and friendly. But at heart he was deeply angered; he could now believe that all Monroe's Cabinet excepting Calhoun had worked constantly to defeat him at all hazards; and in private letters he denounced Clay as the "Judas of the West," who had closed the contract for his thirty pieces of silver.†

As for poor, palsied Crawford, the final news from the House, it is said, at first overcame him, and then he conversed as though he had never been a candidate. He had so far recovered his health since summer as to be able to attend cabinet meetings and perform his work after a perfunctory fashion; but his memory was fatally impaired, his intellect was more disordered than he could admit to himself, and instead of a new official career, he needed nothing so much as long rest and an utter immunity from responsibility of every kind. To this mournful exit of ambition, fate, the inexorable, pointed; and yet with such pertinacity had Crawford clung to the thought of success, that his friends found themselves bound in honor to humor him to the last, while Clay mourned that he himself had been sacrificed in consequence. The fibre of such an ambition might well excite a generous compassion, were it not for the venom

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* Niles's Register; Annals of Congress; 6 Adams's Diary.

† See Jackson's letter to Lewis, Feb. 14, 1825; Parton's Jackson.

generated by defeat, which left him noxious in his sorrow.*

The situation of affairs, foreign and domestic, as presented in Monroe's final message, realized the most sanguine anticipations of national peace and prosperity. He had invariably cherished the most friendly relations with every power on principles which might make them permanent; to place our commerce with each power, as far as possible, on a footing of reciprocity; to settle existing differences in the spirit of candor and liberality, and remove, as far as practicable, all cause of future variance.† All danger from the Holy Alliance had now passed away. With France the convention of 1822 remained in force, but our spoliation claims made no progress. In September, 1824, died Louis, and his successor was immediately proclaimed under the style of Charles X. Sweden, the Netherlands, Prussia, and the lesser European powers had placed their commerce with the United States on a highly favorable footing; Russia, likewise, whose claims on the

* We shall see hereafter how bitterly Crawford revenged himself on Calhoun. A singular story, but fairly vouched for, is related by Adams in his Diary. Crawford, it is said, not long before Monroe's administration expired, being one day in a peevish and irritable mood, cursed the President to his face while they were conversing together upon the subject of some appointments, and seemed on the point of assaulting him. Monroe was about to ring for a servant and have the Secretary turned out of the house, when he apologized and withdrew quietly. After this, it was said, personal intercourse between President and Secretary ceased, and Crawford's clerk became, as before, the official medium when business was to be transacted. See 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 81.

With regard to Crawford's conduct, Monroe, in a letter to Wirt in 1824, recalled how little in harmony with other members Crawford had been in the cabinet deliberations. "My own opinion has been," he adds, "taking the whole subject in view, that it comported better with the principles of our government and with my own character to permit him to remain than to remove him, and I have so acted. Had I taken a different view of the subject I should not have hesitated to remove him; in that event I would have gone directly to the object." Monroe MSS., 1824. See also MSS., 1826.

† President's annual message, December, 1824.

northwest coast of America had been defined and abated by a convention lately concluded at St. Petersburg.*

This convention with Russia defined American rights on the northwest coast. It declared the navigation and fisheries of the Pacific free to both parties, and fixed the line of 54° 40′ north latitude as the dividing line of colonization by the respective powers; no Russian establishment henceforth to be formed to the south, and none by the United States to the north of that line. The negotiation thus happily concluded was begun at the Emperor's own instance, who wished to include Great Britain also in some sort of triple arrangement on this subject. The United States had at this time a settlement at the mouth of the Columbia river, our only one as yet on the Pacific coast, founded soon after the expedition of Lewis and Clarke, but broken up by the enemy during the war of 1812. Its possession being quickly resumed on the peace, as one of the posts properly surrendered back to the United States under the Treaty of Ghent, we soon found Great Britain watchful in that direction; and when, during the winter of 1820–21, a project was discussed in Congress and through the press for increasing our Oregon settlement, Stratford Canning† put Adams quite out of temper by setting up in a rude and arrogant manner that Great Britain

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* See 8 U. S. Statutes at Large; treaty, April 5, 1824, ratified January 11, 1825.

† See J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1821; Monroe MSS.; and for reported interviews with Bagot, Diary, 1817, 1818. Stratford Canning, the son of a London merchant, and cousin of the famous prime minister, who succeeded the popular Bagot, and lived about three years at Washington, is described as cold and reserved in manners, but a man of exquisite refinement and high breeding, as well as honorable; tall, slender, somewhat out of health, and for that reason in the habit of drinking healths in toast and water instead of generous wine, a partiality which gave occasion to many jests when his ruse was discovered. With perfect courtesy at most times, he would display impatience and asperity of temper at some critical moment. In later life, as Lord Stratford de Redclyffe, he had much to do with precipitating the Crimean war by thus irritating Gortschakoff while negotiating with him. See Seaton's Biography; Kinglake's Crimean War.

had rights there. Pacific claims and the northwest boundary were among the disputes left with Rush to settle; but Canning parried every effort to bring Russia, England, and the United States into concert, claiming satirically that the Monroe doctrine upon future colonization forestalled all discussion.

Friendly, indeed, as our relations with England remained, Rush saw no hope of accomplishing more by his mission. The West India trade, impressment, the abolition of privateering, made no advance; both as to rights in the St. Lawrence and on the northwest coast his views and Canning's were so wide apart that discussion grew painful. On the other hand, a new convention for suppressing the slave trade, which Rush made as palatable as possible,—Stratford Canning, now back again in London, being a negotiator on the English side,—was still found unsatisfactory to the American government on the right of search, and the subject remained open.*

The decline of the ocean slave trade under auspices which reflected lustre upon the American navy was, nevertheless, asserted, and truthfully, too, in English documents. And while little value could be placed upon praise of the United States which came from either wing of the British aristocracy, Whig or Tory, Jeffrey at least praised our President for his magnanimous stand upon the South American question.† With these new republics our relations were friendly. We had ministers plenipotentiary at Colombia and Chili, and had received ministers of the same rank from Colombia, Guatemala, Buenos Ayres, and Mexico. With Colombia a treaty of commerce had been

* Monroe MSS.; letters from Rush, 1824. Rush signed this convention March 13, 1824. It was ratified by the Senate, so amended that either party might renounce at six months' notice. Some southerners seem to have feared lest Great Britain and the United States should extend co-operation in the direction of abolition. To the amendment Great Britain would not accede, but proposed a new negotiation, which our whole cabinet agreed was inexpedient for the present. J. Q. Adams's Diary, Nov. 1824.

† Monroe MSS.; Rush's letters, 1824.

negotiated, and had it not been for the sudden death of Rodney at Buenos Ayres a similar negotiation would have been commenced in that country. Our navy, under Commodore Porter, had done much of late to suppress with a strong hand piracies about Matanzas and the West Indies, from which commerce had long suffered; and the Barbary powers which once exacted a tribute gave new proofs of a permanent respect.*

At home all was tranquil and prosperous. Whether the Union or the States composing it were looked at, our growth was found to be rapid beyond all example. A moderate revenue proved adequate to the wants of the general government. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, all the peaceful arts flourished. The new system of fortifications and the new naval equipment advanced to completion. The Treasury once more overflowed, and that condition, whose mirage was seen in 1817, approached at last in palpable form. Public credit stood upright. The national debt, already reduced within eight years, in spite of temporary discouragements, from $123,000,000 to $79,000,000, the amount at which it stood on the 1st of January, 1825, might readily be discharged in ten years more, leaving the large annual surplus thereafter to be applied in a manner most conducive to the public welfare.†

Monroe's last message, as drafted, was a very long one, and contained a paragraph upon the reconciliation of parties which he concluded to omit, lest offence should be given. Its purport was that there had once been a party averse to republican institutions, but now by experience reconciled to them.‡ Allowing that a change of views in a party may be effected not by the conversion of individuals alone, but by the accession of a younger and more liberal element of membership, the remark was just; though we

* See Message 1824 and documents; Treaty with Algiers ratified Feb. 10, 1822.

† See Monroe's Message Dec. 1824, and executive documents.

‡ J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, November, 1824.

must further add that no leaders in American politics ever made opinions for their followers so constantly or exacted such deference from rank and file than the old Federalists in the day of their national strength.

Monroe blended in happy proportions the statesman and politician. "It has been," he would say, "a great object with me to conciliate the people of this Union with one another and quench the ardor of party spirit. But in doing this I have felt obliged to consider how far I can yield to my own disposition without forfeiting the confidence of my own party; and to go faster in this than public sentiment is simply to defeat my own purpose."*

Of the entire success of his method, Massachusetts afforded the latest instance. That last of wanderers came into the Republican fold before Monroe laid down office; for in 1823 Eustis was chosen governor of this State; an aged Republican, but a true one. His simple manners contrasted with those of his competitor, the brilliant and dashing Otis,—figure-head of social Boston, eloquent and witty, whose low-hung carriage, with splendid horses and livery, were the glory of Beacon Street. Alas! that so fine an equipage could not run down the recollection of the Hartford Convention.† Eustis lived long enough to see the Massachusetts legislature, by condemning the unpatriotic record of 1812–14, place the State once more in cordial relation with the federal Union.‡ But the war claim of Massachusetts, which Otis, while a Senator, had pressed, without what he called truckling and humiliation, neither

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* Monroe's conversation, 1823, related 6 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 128.

† See newspapers of the day. Quincy's "Figures of the Past" well describes Harrison Gray Otis, who, in his day, filled a place in Boston society that no one could well make good. He wore the mantle of his uncle, the great Otis, whose Life by Tudor was at this time published, and ardently desired to be governor of the State which cherished that immortal name. To this his war record proved an obstacle, but it did not prevent him from serving acceptably as mayor of Boston.

‡ One act of this legislature consisted in expunging the obnoxious resolution of 1813 to the effect that rejoicing over the naval victories was "unbecoming a moral and religious people." 25 Niles's Register, 337.

Lloyd, his successor in Congress, nor all the Massachusetts delegation and Massachusetts governors together could induce Congress and the national government to adjust for many years.* Monroe himself left a last good word for this claim, though a cautious one.†

Peace, prosperity, and the revival of patriotic feeling over Lafayette's visit marked the close of this remarkable administration; the last in fact which linked our people with the Revolutionary age. Monroe's policy had been a broad one. Within eight years the government had made great strides towards establishing our interests and empire in this continent; we had added the Floridas, planted our flag firmly on the Pacific coast, befriended, first of all nations, the cause of Spain's revolting colonies. To the disdain once shown by European powers had succeeded respect for a nation which had vindicated its policy through peace and war. Upon the enlargement of the map of this Union beyond the confines of the old thirteen, the name of Monroe stands indelibly inscribed. Louisiana spoke, therefore, with a gratitude peculiarly filial in the resolutions of sympathy offered by its legislature upon his retirement. Other legislatures, those, for instance, of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Alabama, Maryland, and South Carolina, dwelt more generally upon his impartial and dignified course, his essential services, and long tried patriotism. Tokens of approval reached the retiring President from men of all political shades. The hoary John Adams congratulated him on the singular felicity of an administration "which, as far as I know, has been without fault." And Marshall wrote in

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* See 4 U. S. Stats. at Large, 428 (1830); 5 ib., 132, 623.

† Governor Strong of Massachusetts in 1814 refused to place the militia of the State under the command of the national Executive, though warned at the time of the consequences, nor did the State legislature disavow the act. Strong was much under the influence of Chief Justice Parsons when he led Massachusetts into this difficulty. See vol. ii, p. 424; 6 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; Monroe's special message, February, 1825.

similar strain, "The retrospect is not darkened by a single spot."*

Thus peacefully glided to its eight years' close one of the most serene, dignified, and at the same time successful administrations the world ever saw. For our people this respite from party strife was a beautiful, though passing episode. Party men no longer, they seemed to themselves national men, Americans in a greater sense than they had dreamed possible. The whole mechanism of society moved in perfect order. The democracy ruled, but it was a democracy in which jealousies found no root, and the abler and more virtuous of the community took the lead. None needed to despair; all were cheerful and hopeful. Busy and prospering, each fell happily into his own routine, and was well disposed to those above or below him. To the oppressed of other nations we shone with a steady flame, that our light might be a help and comfort. A breath dissolves this picture; and fiercer passions rule once more the hearts of men. That this ideal government of the people had felt the touch of consecration for the moment was not, however, to be doubted. The people were guided by the silent influence of a lofty example, and walked safely in the clear upper air.

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* See Monroe MSS.

CHAPTER XII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

SECTION I.

PERIOD OF NINETEENTH CONGRESS.

March 4, 1825—March 3, 1827.

THE era of good feeling was precisely coeval with Monroe's double term of office. Its impulse, however, in the quickening of the national spirit was carried to a far later date. Nor did party virulence break out into anything like an angry and indecent expression * before Lafayette had re-embarked for France and a new Congress listened to the new President's first annual message. Party lines, nevertheless, began to be drawn for 1828, and the new political elements to re-combine the moment Monroe retired; and a new and formidable coalition of the disappointed candidates threatened, thwarted, and then overthrew his successor. Hence the most tranquil of administrations was followed, like a thunderclap, by one of the stormiest.

New national parties must inevitably have arisen. But two causes at this time hastened their formation: (1) The clear and vigorous policy which Adams chose to personify in himself; (2) the peculiar circumstances attending his elevation and the choice of his cabinet. These causes, operating together and continually, drove all opponents of the new administration into a natural coalition, forcing a division line; popular elements naturally sluggish, leaped into new relations, and a furious struggle for the mastery was the consequence, personal in its inception, but not

* Unless the peculiar controversy with Governor Troup of Georgia be taken as an exception.

without developing differences of political principle, as well as of taste or temper, as it proceeded.

(1) The policy purposed by an Executive so positive in his convictions, so earnest, so self-reliant, could not have been brought out otherwise than in bold relief. Standing before a crowded auditory in the hall whence the credentials of Presidential title were but lately derived, and where in after years he laid his fame upon its most lasting foundations, John Quincy Adams, clad in homespun black, delivered his inaugural address from the Speaker's chair. It was clearly, brilliantly written, but as pronounced in his harsh, metallic voice, wanted something of the patient, sympathetic quality to which the country had so long been used. As a minority President, at all events, he found an audience critical, disposed to carp, neither easily moved in his favor nor easily satisfied. He praised, in courteous terms, his predecessor and his predecessor's policy; and yet old Republicans saw this proselyte to their faith pushing principles beyond Monroe's experimental standard. Monroe's idea had been that the present extinction of party spirit was the ultimate triumph of Republicanism; but Adams, studiously impartial, recalled the sacrifices and errors alike of the two great political parties, now extinct. He assumed, in effect, that this baneful weed of party strife had already been uprooted, and nothing remained but to embrace as countrymen and friends, and yield henceforth to talents and virtue alone the confidence formerly bestowed upon those who bore the badge of party communion.* Monroe, though yielding much to the popular pressure for internal improvement, had set up constitutional scruples; but Adams, casting those scruples aside as though unworthy a rational man's regard, announced internal improvement as the cardinal policy by which his administration should stand or fall.† And in his first annual message he took yet bolder ground in favor of paternal government

* Inaugural address, March 4, 1825.
† Ib.

and national expenditure; urging Congress to multiply roads and canals, endow a university, sanction expenditures for scientific research and inquiry, and erect on American soil an astronomical observatory, or "light-house of the skies." * This was an enlightened policy, indeed; but a bold one for an administration to take so early, which had come into power without a popular support behind it, and knew not clearly the face of friend from that of foe. To follow events rather than lead would have been the safer position, in its first hour of weakness.

(2) Upon the second cause referred to, much has been said and written on both sides, and not with entire candor. There is no denial that the written law gives to Congress, or rather to the House of Representatives voting after a certain manner, the free right to select from among the three highest candidates, where no one has received the electoral majority, without regarding whether this one or that had the larger number of votes. So by the same written law may electors cast their several votes at an individual discretion. But the unwritten law in our day pledges the individual elector to fulfil the choice of those who selected him to vote. And so deeply has the democratic principle ramified in political practice, and the wide substitution of the plurality for the majority test in all elections, that were the House of Representatives now to encounter a responsibility like that of 1825, a like respect for the unwritten law would lead it to prefer, out of the three names on the list, the highest, or that of the plurality candidate. Thus, at least, and not otherwise, would its decision attach the public respect. But as early as 1825 neither unwritten proposition had been firmly established. Adams's title to the Presidency was undisputed. He was inaugurated with as much pomp and decorum as any of his predecessors. Music and cavalry led the way; the Ex-President, the chief justice, officers of the army and navy, judges in their gowns, the diplomatic corps, members of the Senate, all

* Annual Message, Dec. 1825.

whose presence at the ceremony could lend it impressiveness were present; plaudits, cheers, the salute of artillery, followed the oath of office, and among the earliest of those who took the hand of our new President, before he should leave the hall, was General Jackson, whose motions on this occasion a thousand eager eyes were quick to notice. When Adams, pen in hand, before retiring, on the night of February 9th, implored the blessing of God upon the event of that day, the thought that an injury had been done to Jackson or the people of the United States could not have crossed his mind.* The instance was entirely a novel one in our national history.

But there was an injury committed, notwithstanding; and in order that the legal title should, under such circumstances, conform to the spirit of equity, it was essential that this choice by the House, which set aside the popular or electoral preference, should appear wholly untainted by the suspicion of corrupt bias. For whatever politicians may contrive, the American people insist upon fair play. How deep then must have been the public sense of outrage when one minority candidate thus chosen was seen to bestow unhesitatingly the chief cabinet office upon another minority candidate, whose vote and influence had just placed him in his invidious dignity; announcing him as prime among advisers of the incoming administration. Clay virtually elected Adams President; Adams at once tendered and Clay accepted the portfolio of State; these are well authenticated facts of history. This alliance was proclaimed in the face of a timely though angry warning, and as if to brave an opposition which charged foul play. To vindicate the purity of personal motives by taking the tainted advantage is courage misplaced; for blunders, as well as crimes, may turn out fatal in politics. No calm pursuit of duty, no denial, no solemn asseveration, no address to constituents, no duel—for if duels could establish honor in such a case Clay cleared him-

* See National Intelligencer, March 5, 1825; Adams's Diary, February-March, 1825.

self—neither the endorsement of friends nor the retraction of opponents, could remove the seal of public condemnation from that transaction. For the question was not of moral intentions alone, but of moral effect. The spoils were divided; and while positive testimony could not be adduced on the one side, neither on the other was it possible to prove a negative.

Both Clay and Adams were men of probity; both professed a delicate regard for personal reputation. Anything so gross as the direct barter of votes for an office was foreign to their methods, to those of Adams in particular, and their ample denial should dispel the charge of a corrupt understanding, in the most heinous sense of that term. Kremer, who first made the charge, is believed to have written a letter of regret, which he was with difficulty restrained from publishing. Buchanan, to whom Jackson pointed as witness of the corruption, showed only that there had been unsuccessful effort to seduce Clay to Jackson's support by a like offer. Obliquity was never proved, though Jackson and his friends returned constantly to the charge. Nothing, in short, worthy the calm attention of posterity is left of this story except the admissions of the principals concerned in their own contemporary writings since published. Some biographers to this day announce conclusions as though no such writings existed, but they have been cited in these pages,* and deserve the closer study of all who care to explore into the turbid bottoms of political history. Candor must declare, in view of these writings, that many a campaign censure has gained credit on less circumstantial testimony. The fairest conclusion, therefore, convicts both of essential indecorum; and while Clay's was the greater, upon Adams came the heavier burden of odium. The whole atmosphere of this Presidential campaign, indeed, with which the people had so little real connection, had been surcharged from the beginning with bargains, solicitations, and attempts to transfer

* See *supra*, pp. 327, 328.

individual support hither and thither; and none had fought in the fog more daringly than Clay, whose ambition, despite his noble qualities and that generosity of character which attached friends so warmly, Adams himself had noted was too ardent to be very scrupulous or delicate.* Scarcely was it seen that the electoral lottery, by a singular turn of the wheel, had given him the chance to award the prize, while himself thrown out of the competition, than he reached out to grasp the benefits of the situation. Not through personal friends alone, whose overtures, if too eager, one might have disavowed, but in person (their approaches paving the way to his own confidential interview), he oppressed Adams with the full sense of his power, his friendly disposition, and, at the same time, his wish for a particular office. Adams, who was conciliating support wherever he could, short of giving dishonorable pledges,—more complaisant, in fact, that winter with the prize thus dangling before his reach than ever before or after,—caught at Clay's full meaning; making it, as one may infer, in some sort a matter of conscience to gratify Clay for the service. Such is the tale of Adams's Diary, without the effort to interject a sentence where his pen so singularly stopped.†

It is undeniable that Clay, so far from shrinking at the painful alternative thrust upon him, or casting his own vote apart, brought his friends into full concert and made Adams's election sure by uniting their strength. Nor can it be doubted that both Clay and Adams, in the first transport of victory, were too ardent to perceive the false step they were taking; the storm about their ears seemed but the passing shower of disappointed rage. Never was lash put more foolishly into an enemy's hand, or used by that enemy with greater effect. The charge of corrupt bargain had simply to be made and repeated to produce an

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* Adams's Diary, 1822. Gallatin and others at this date wrote of Clay in similar strain.

† *Supra*, p. 327.

overwhelming effect. Adams's administration was put at once upon the defensive and kept so.*

Let us do these eminent men justice. Clay's position, with reference to the House election of President, had been highly critical, and such as must have exposed him to censure, whichever path he took. The friends of all three of the candidates solicited his influence, and whichever one he pronounced for—if he must needs have pronounced at all—he was likely to make two enemies for every friend. His choice was intelligently made. With Crawford he had nearly coalesced during the campaign, but revulsion naturally followed failure; besides which, Crawford's infirm state of health was reason enough why any one should refuse to vote for him. Jackson, ever since the Seminole debates, had been Clay's personal enemy, while his own prepossessions against military chieftains remained unaltered; and though the West grew fast it was hardly great enough as yet to support two Presidential aspirants. To the eastern candidate, therefore, Clay naturally turned. "I have interrogated my conscience," he wrote, "as to what I ought to do, and that faithful guide tells me that I ought to vote for Adams." † And had he simply voted thus, and kept the umpire robes unsullied, not all the effusions of malice and disappointed rage could have shaken him with the people. But for the moment, no doubt, such self-denial seemed to savor too much of quixotism, and Clay could not practise it.

As for Adams, his honorable purpose is best attested by other entries of his Diary at this date.‡ Proposing to himself, under the peculiar circumstances of his election, "con-

* The exalted strain of disinterestedness which begins with Clay's letters of 1825, after the rumor of a bargain was started, is in strange contrast with the low tone of those of 1823 and 1824, immediately preceding, which show him managing anxiously his own canvass and ready for arrangements in his interest, whether, by so coalescing, he might come in as President or Vice-President. See Clay's Private Correspondence.

† See Clay's Private Correspondence, January, 1825.

‡ These disclosures seem to have been quite overlooked by others who have written on this subject.

ciliation and not collision," for a motto, his first design was to make up an administration of the late aspirants for the Presidency with himself at the head. Besides Clay for Secretary of State, he fixed upon Crawford for the Treasury and Jackson for the War Department, the other offices remaining filled as before. The project did more credit to the generosity of the President-elect than to his knowledge of human nature. Crawford pointedly refused the Treasury; and upon inquiring as to Jackson's disposition, Adams became so well assured that he would take the offer of a cabinet post in ill part that he concluded not to make it. Gallatin, too, was approached, but his response was a biting innuendo about standing above suspicion. Rush, returning from England, was called, therefore, to the Treasury, and James Barbour, whose friendly overtures have been mentioned,* took the place intended for the implacable Jackson.

The new cabinet appointments, comprising Henry Clay of Kentucky as Secretary of State, Richard Rush of Pennsylvania as Secretary of the Treasury, and James Barbour of Virginia as Secretary of War, were all confirmed by the Senate; but such was the opposition to Clay, under the present circumstances, that, regardless of the usual courtesy shown to the cabinet list of an incoming administration, a large negative vote was cast against him, the vote on confirming his nomination standing 27 to 14. Samuel L. Southard of New Jersey remained Secretary of the Navy, and William Wirt of Virginia Attorney-General. McLean of Ohio continued in the office of Postmaster-General. Alexander H. Everett of Massachusetts, a brother of Edward Everett, and a man of scholarly gifts, was appointed minister to Spain, and Joel R. Poinsett of South Carolina to Mexico. Both these appointments, however, were, strictly speaking, Monroe's, though submitted to Adams's approval. The conciliating bent of the new ad-

* See *supra*, p. 326.

ministration, to which allusion has been made, appeared further in filling the vacant English mission, the best office, if not the only one outside the cabinet which Adams held clearly at his own disposal. This was tendered to De Witt Clinton,* who had already gone into the opposition, and was refused; and then the aged King, who had been one of the first to congratulate the President-elect,† received the appointment, and after much pressing consented to accept the post. There was something touching in the return of this illustrious statesman to the court of London that he might serve the son abroad as he had served the father; but King, who had reached his threescore and ten, belonged already to the past, and after accomplishing nothing, he came back over the ocean in ill health to die at home. By such an appointment Adams made good his promise to treat Federalists fairly; but as most other offices were left as before, pending their natural vacancies, Webster and the younger men of this school found little or no recognition. In truth, Adams found that for every vacancy some Federalist was brought forward, a good man, but obnoxious to the mass of the people, and in the danger of wounding either Federalists or Republicans he dreaded all the more making a new appointment.‡

It was impossible that an Adams, however conciliating his first intentions, should surrender to advice or pursue an executive system framed to any extent by party supporters. There is something sad, as well as inspiring, in the picture which the new President draws of his own dogged resistance to the office-seekers and meddlers with patronage. In making up his civil list, on the 5th of March, he entered officers of the customs, registrars, receivers, all whose com-

* See 50 Harper's Magazine, 563. Clinton's correspondence shows that his clear preference in January was Jackson. On the 7th of March, just after declining the mission to England, he denounced the appointment of Clay as corruptly made.

† See Adams's Diary, February 9, 1825.

‡ See Niles's Register; Lodge's Webster; Adams's Diary; Gallatin's Works; 50 Harper's Magazine, 563.

missions were about expiring, for renomination. "Efforts," he says, "had been made by some of the Senators to obtain different nominations, and to introduce a principle of change or rotation in office at the expiration of these commissions which would make the Government a perpetual and uninterrmitting scramble for office. A more pernicious expedient could scarcely have been devised." "I determined to renominate every person against whom there was no complaint which would have warranted his removal; and renominated every person nominated by Monroe and upon whose nomination the Senate had declined acting."*

Clay urged the removal of one of the customs officers as a noisy and persistent reviler of the administration. But Adams was not inclined to comply. No officer dependent on the will of the President should after the election be allowed to keep up an open and continual disparagement. "This I concede as a principle," said the President, "but find it difficult to apply to individuals." Of the customs officers in the United States, probably four-fifths were opposed to his election. Many importuned him to sweep them away and fill the vacancies from among his friends. But he could not commit himself to such a policy. Two years later, when elections had run unfavorably, he was entreated to confine his appointments henceforth to his friends; but he was still reluctant to do so.

In the Senate vote upon Clay's confirmation might be detected the first symptom that the Jackson and Crawford elements had begun to combine against the new administration. Caucus Crawfordites here voted to some extent with Senators from Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and South Carolina; and a rallying of the South and southern interests and prejudices against a northern President was apparent. Crawford having been finally abandoned as a candidate, the main object was to unite his forces under Jackson's banner, and bring in the plurality candidate as

* See Adams's Diary, March, 1825.

next President upon a cry of fraud. A shaping hand in this coalition was Calhoun's, who had begun upon it in earnest the instant the alliance of Adams and Clay became certain, though not without a timely warning, which Adams thoroughly understood.* The new President was resolved not to be intimidated.

From this point Adams and Calhoun wholly diverged. Calhoun had by no means been content to regard the Vice-Presidency as filling the measure of his national ambition. Once more should it be a stepping stone; and, to this end, an administration must first be brought in and directed under his auspices. But Calhoun, in the new political emergency, had to recast his principles; and gladly in after years would he have erased from the record all that he had hitherto said and written upon the subject of internal improvements.

It was not strange that the new chief magistrate, seeking to organize a party support, should lay the foundation of his policy in grand works of public improvement. To his mind the roads and aqueducts of Rome were among the glories of that ancient republic more imperishable than its conquests. This year, 1825, was a remarkable one in the history of canal-building in the United States. The Erie canal was completed by the autumn; never having been interrupted in its construction since the 1825. first spadeful of earth was lifted, eight years earlier, on the 4th of July; but pushed on incessantly by the governor, whose good fortune it was to supervise both the beginning and end of an enterprise whose success was due, most of all, to his foresight and unflagging perseverance. In October, 1819, water was first let into the trench, 1819. and a large boat drawn by a horse from Utica to Rome and back again, thirty miles in eight hours. Four years later Albany rejoiced over the passage of the 1823. first boat into the Hudson, all but the section between Lockport and Buffalo being then finished, besides

* Ib., February, 1825. See Final Notes.

the northern or Champlain canal.* In the culminating success and celebration, October 26, 1825, the whole
1825. October. State of New York bore a part. At ten in the forenoon the waters of Lake Erie were admitted at Buffalo, and a flotilla of canal-boats, headed by the "Seneca Chief," in which Clinton and other dignitaries were conveyed, moved along the unruffled surface of a highway 363 miles in length, day and night, passing safely into the stone aqueduct at Rochester, mooring over Sunday at Utica, and by November 2d reaching Albany in safety.
November. Rural settlers all the way had flocked to the banks to greet the strange little squadron, one of whose novelties consisted in a sort of Noah's ark, which displayed various creeping things, besides an eagle and Indian products of the west. From Albany the novel tour was resumed, under a steam tow, to New York harbor. On the bright clear morning of November 4th the ringing of the city bells, strains of martial music, and the boom of cannon announced to the world that the aquatic procession from
Nov. 4. Lake Erie was on its way to Sandy Hook. Ships at anchor saluted the modest flotilla, while steamboats and light craft bore down to bear it company to the sea. The "Seneca Chief" bore from Buffalo kegs painted green, adorned with gilded hoops, and filled with Lake Erie water. When Sandy Hook was reached, the procession stopped; and Clinton, lifting high in air one of these kegs, poured its contents into the sea, mingling for the first time the fresh and briny waters. "This solemnity," he observed, impressively, "on the first arrival of vessels from Lake Erie is intended to commemorate the navigable communication accomplished between our Mediterranean seas and the Atlantic ocean." The return of the flotilla to the metropolis was followed by a civic pageant; and this amphibious nine days' rejoicing ended after dusk in a rare pyrotechnic display. That graceful edifice, the City Hall, was lit up for the occasion by over 2000 lamps and wax candles, and fire-

* See Niles's Register, 1819, 1823; newspapers of the day.

works was belched from the roof like some captive dragon of fairy land put to sulphurous proof.*

"At this epoch," observes the annalist, "the history of modern New York properly begins;"† so we may add does that of inland transportation in the modern sense of the term. Men and merchandise had never before been moved in the mass where the white wings of commerce could not enter. Through an artificial highway, 40 feet wide and 4 deep, boats, expressly built for the new canal traffic, carried 30 or 40 tons, each capable of being drawn, unless heavily laden, by a single horse. A ton of flour, which it had cost $100 to convey from Buffalo to Albany overland, might now be sent for $10. All vessels, whether owned in or out of the State, were allowed to navigate the canal on paying the transit duties; nevertheless, the main traffic, which set in briskly between the west and the seaboard, enriched the State most of all. The debt created by the construction of the Erie and Champlain canals was $7,944,000; paying an interest of 6½ per cent. The fund in 1826 applicable to discharge this debt amounted to $1,057,585; and the whole system more than repaid its original cost out of the profits in a brief space of years, for the tolls collected left a large surplus annually after providing interest on the loan and repairs.

The first faint omen of success in Clinton's enterprise had stirred other States to prosecuting the work of slack-water improvements. The oldest canals in the United States were in Massachusetts; the Middlesex canal, which connected Boston harbor with the Merrimack river, and was completed in 1808, being the first undertaking of the kind on this continent of any considerable magnitude. But it was the Erie canal which gave the chief impulse to works of this character. Pennsylvania, threatened with the loss of her western trade by the great canal on one side

* See Mrs. Lamb's History of New York, vol. ii; 29 Niles's Register; newspapers of the day.

† Mrs. Lamb's History.

and the National Road on the other, projected a system which, by uniting the Schuylkill, the Susquehanna, and the Alleghany rivers, might bring Philadelphia and Pittsburg into close relations. Ohio sought a water highway between Lake Erie and the Ohio river; * the Chesapeake and Ohio canal was the favorite scheme in Virginia and Maryland. Many works were planned and begun during the excitement of these next few years, works which demanded a State and begged a national appropriation. Though canals froze up in winter, and it seemed needful, where long systems of the kind were planned, to pass from river to river as nature might direct, rather than undertake a direct route, men prophesied boldly that the day was coming when teas and silks would be brought by watercourses from Oregon to Philadelphia. After all, the first bold innovator reaped not only the chief fame but the chief emolument. As steamboats had hindered the post-chaise from coming into fashion in America, so the new "steam wagons," upon which interesting experiments had already begun in England, soon began to outrival the canal, and capital was sunk in these enterprises where instant profit was looked for. This canal mode of conveyance was ill-suited to passengers, being dull and tedious; it was best adapted to heavy freight where delay was of no consequence. As early as 1826 the New York legislature was asked to incorporate a company to lay a horse railroad track between the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, so as to avoid the loss of time incurred in passing through the canal from Schenectady to Albany.

In this halcyon day of slack-water enterprises even ship-canals were discussed; and whether to cut Cape Cod or the Isthmus of Panama are questions scarcely less interesting now than they were in 1825.

Steamboats made an important factor in this new system of inland transportation; and had not railways checked the use of canals, steam would quite likely have become

* Ground was broken for the great Ohio canal July 4, 1825.

in time the usual motive power for canal-boats. Of manifold importance, now that Buffalo and Albany were united, the swift carriers which made Fulton's name immortal puffed up and down the Hudson, their first breeding-place, busier than ever. That monopoly for the use of the steamboat in New York waters which the Fulton and Livingston alliance had enjoyed under its thirty years grant from the State legislature, the highest tribunal * now pronounced repugnant to the federal constitution and the power vested in Congress to regulate commerce. Thus, as some scholars lamented, the fortune of the great inventor of his age was scattered to the four winds of heaven. The Livingston and Clinton families, by an accidental association of services, gave to their State, as a last legacy, a cheap inland intercourse, worth more than any gold mine. Steamboats ere this plowed our western waters and navigated the chief rivers of Europe from the Thames to the Volga. They bore passengers and freight through Long Island Sound, across the East river and by coastwise lines from New York to Norfolk, New Orleans, and various southern points. But they dared not yet venture to make regular trips across the ocean.† An accident which occurred in 1823, one dark night on the Mississippi, where a floating palace with nearly two hundred passengers on board went down in five minutes after striking a snag, gave a new sensation of the horrors to which wholesome locomotion would be of necessity exposed; yet the glory of abridging distances triumphed over all fears. Wonderful did it seem to go by

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* See Gibbons *vs.* Ogden, 9 Wheat. 1.

† But such vessels had crossed the ocean. Rush, in his "Court of London," notes that the American steamship "Savannah" arrived at Liverpool June 20, 1819, to the surprise of the people of that city. She was a vessel of above 300 tons burden, and was the first that had crossed the ocean by steam. Her passage was 26 days, the weather being generally unfavorable, and a delay of five days occurring in the Irish channel to get fresh coal.

Elegant packet ships plied in 1825 between New York and Liverpool or Havre; each being of about 500 tons, and sometimes making the passage in 17 days.

stage and boat in eight hours from Philadelphia to New York, and by a stretch of the imagination one fancied himself exclaiming "to New York" or "to Baltimore," and being transported thither by steam while taking a nap.* "The man is now living," Oliver Evans had predicted in the eighteenth century, "who will see the Ohio and the Mississippi covered with steamboats; and the child is born who will travel from Philadelphia to Boston in a day." One of these predictions had already proved true; and so vivid was the impression deeply made by the genius of locomotion thus early that two claimants contended before Congress for a subsidy, each asserting that it was his of right as the first inventor of a machine which propelled in the air.

There was no travelling post or post-chaise in America, but relays of horses could be obtained in populous sections of the country. At New York one wishing to travel privately might hire for himself and friends a neat pleasure wagon with a driver and pair of fleet horses for five dollars a day; or he might charter a coach at the same cost. In the northern and eastern States, roads were good for quite nine months of the year, and many of them compared favorably with the English turnpikes; but in the South wheels sank to the hub in mud, especially at the season of spring freshets, while in regions remote from settlement roads grew gradually worse until some logging path ended in a blazed tree. Strong wagons of three tons capacity, drawn by four horses, still brought the country produce to the great market towns; the driver, who was usually a farmer's son, setting out long before daybreak, and after resting in the woods to make a fire and boil his coffee, jogging on at the rate of thirty miles a day, his provender stowed under the seat, and the huge canvas arch affording him a shelter by night. The stages at this time in general use accommodated nine passengers, the centre seat moving on a hinge, and leather curtains rolling at the side. The body of the coach was

* 22 Niles's Register; papers of the day.

slung upon two immense springs and rolled or bounced as it was driven. Mails were carried, not in separate bags for each town, but in a huge bag, out of which each postmaster picked his portion, delaying the passengers. The coachman would drive up to the post-office and throw the bag (about the size of a flour sack) upon the pavement; it was trailed into the office, and while the mail was being sorted inside one might see through the window men of influence, young and old, with their heads close together as the process went on.

Local highways in New York and the east, more especially, were made and kept in repair by the inhabitants; and working out the annual highway tax thus is still very common in country towns. County commissioners exercised certain functions in road-building. But great routes were often laid down by some act of the legislature, or else a charter was granted to capitalists, who built at their own expense and charged tolls upon the public. There were many private turnpike and bridge companies.

Lafayette traversed a great part of the Erie canal while on his way to Boston in the summer of 1825; his barge was drawn by superb white horses, and flowers were showered upon him by the spectators as he passed under a bridge. His long journey through the south and west by way of Charleston, New Orleans, Cincinnati, and Pittsburg, had been pursued with such soldierly precision—only one accident marring the pleasure of the whole tour, and that the wreck of a steamboat on the Ohio, by which he lost a part of his baggage—that he reached Boston for a second visit in ample season to perform the part assigned to him at the Bunker Hill celebration on the 17th of June. It was a memorable occasion; the aged survivors of the battle fought fifty years before were gathered from far and near; Webster, in the zenith of his fame and the full majesty of his magnificent presence, was orator of the day; a brilliant civil and military procession gave an imposing effect to the spec- 1825. June 17.

tacle. The corner-stone of a lofty but simple granite shaft, designed to commemorate the first stubborn contest of the immortal war, and a day whose fallen fortunes "lay in light," was to be placed in position by Lafayette's own hand. If departed heroes ever look down upon the earthly scenes consecrated by their agony, an invisible concourse must have swelled the vast host of sons and daughters of the Pilgrims who gathered on Bunker's height on this perfect summer day. At the foot of the hill stood the orator; a stage having been there erected with a pavilion and seats for ladies and official personages arranged in a semicircle; next above, opposite the stage, though exposed to the rays of the sun, and on the side of the hill, were benches for the veterans of the Revolution, among whom Lafayette, with that tender grace which marked his every public movement, insisted upon sitting after the ceremony of laying the corner-stone was over; behind these sat Masons with their white aprons, blue scarfs, and glancing banners, and the military escort; and over and around all, to the very summit, some sitting, some standing, poured the general multitude, filling every space which permitted the slightest glimpse or sound. The corner-stone of the monument was not visible, occupying the other side of the hill; and the central object now gazed upon was Webster. When he came forward, as the notes of Pierpont's original hymn, sung to the tune of "Old Hundred," died away, there was a roar and a rush, and it seemed for a moment as if the crowd in the rear would sweep down like an avalanche upon the pavilion and the guests seated there. Webster lifted his arm, and with a few commanding words checked the tumult; then all being hushed, he began the oration, still familiar among our heroic epics. As the multitude listened in breathless silence the rich voice of the speaker mingled with the breezes which played over the hill, fragrant with new mown hay.*

* See Quincy's Figures of the Past, where the whole scene is described by an eye witness with picturesque minuteness.

Spending July 4th in New York city, and his own birthday anniversary with President Adams at the White House, Lafayette bade farewell to America on the 7th of September, the day succeeding this latter festivity. A steamboat conveyed him from Washington to the mouth of the Potomac, where a frigate newly built, and named in his honor the "Brandywine," was ready to give him a convoy home more in accordance with the American sense of propriety than that which had brought him over. When he thus re-embarked for France, the round of hospitalities had by no means been exhausted, and many urgent invitations he necessarily declined. Lafayette waved his last adieu to the new world from the deck of the "Brandywine," standing under the American flag with an American commodore by his side. He never saw this continent again; and as the receding ship dwindled into a speck upon the horizon, the last ray of glorious sunshine which made a Revolutionary age live to the senses disappeared forever. A few Revolutionary sages were left, it is true, but their light had so mingled with later strifes that the æther of heroism could not yet envelop them.* July-Sept.

The new century of science and invention had already opened; but much indeed remained still to be writ down in our philosophy. Of public works in America, the Erie canal was at the present date the greatest by far. Aqueducts and reservoirs on an extended scale were not yet constructed; nor had the burghers of the rising municipality of New York shaken off that spirit of niggardly but honest thrift, in civic affairs, which ordained as an extreme concession to art, when the new City Hall was planned, that three walls should be built of white marble and the fourth of freestone. Philadelphia led our American cities in projects of this kind, with her new Fairmount works, which supplied the public with water pumped by steam from the Schuylkill into a tall tower, whence it was dis-

* See for details of Lafayette's tour and departure, Levasseur's Tour.

tributed. Illuminating gas, whose general use in modern times fairly begins with the lighting of London bridge in 1813, about six years before it was introduced into Paris, gained popularity in this country during Lafayette's visit; and the sudden transition from dimness to light produced by the turning of a stop-cock, as the marquis entered the boarded pit from the stage, was the impressive feature of a ball given at the Baltimore theatre in his honor; an effect pronounced grand by those who witnessed it, but in these days common enough.* Gas came into general use in New York city in 1825, many householders dreading the dangers of explosion; and the Broadway shops presented a fine illumination by night. Philadelphia waited ten years longer; but in both cities, and elsewhere in the United States, private capital supplied the light, and the earlier experiments of all were made in mills, theatres, and assembly halls.

Electric telegraphs, of course, there were none; but at the opening of the Erie canal a message was sent from Buffalo to New York and answered with a speed thought amazing. Cannon had been posted at intervals along the whole route; and when the waters of Lake Erie were let into the canal, cannon after cannon announced the event eastward and south, and cannon after cannon responded northward and west. It took an hour and thirty minutes thus to convey the news of the opening to New York, and an hour and thirty minutes for New York's response to reach Buffalo.†

Monday, the 5th of December, saw the nineteenth Congress assembled at the capitol. The House organized by choosing John W. Taylor, of New York, Speaker on the second ballot; the former clerk and other old officers being re-appointed without a contest. Taylor, Clay's whilom predecessor in the chair,

1825. Dec. 5.
1826. May 22.

* See Levasseur's Tour; Niles's Register.
† Mrs. Lamb's History of New York City.

having ranked of late years among Adams's confidential friends, his election by the popular branch seemed an assurance of strength to the administration; but his majority of two was close figuring, and the course of a single session showed an unsteadiness of support by the House, ominous of defeat, upon the chief points of Executive policy. To carry the administration triumphantly through, it was essential to keep the House on its side and win over the Senate; but Adams was of a proud and stubborn temper, and the attempt, if made at all, failed signally. The opposition controlled the Senate; and the two Houses clashing in their views, executive measures were blocked and everything pruned away, if possible, which might have increased the popularity of the new administration.

The grievance of having submitted to a chief magistrate chosen in disregard of the people's preference was kept by this Congress constantly before the people, not only by resolutions of inquiry, but by propositions for amending the constitution, so as to take the choice from the House altogether for the future. Propositions of the kind had, however, been made much earlier, anticipating the dilemma of 1824; by John Taylor, of Virginia, for instance, to the effect that electors should vote, and in case of no choice, vote over again for President.* In the session of 1825-26, various plans were offered in both branches and referred to select committees. McDuffie of South Carolina, a young man of rising renown in debate, who had a southern fervor of manner, and when he spoke gesticulated all over, as it was said, headed the House committee on this subject; Benton of Missouri, a persevering statesman of ideas and egotism, that of the Senate. Benton's committee agreed upon a proposition of amendment, dispensing with electors and providing for districts in which the direct vote of the people should be taken, with a second election between the two highest candidates in the event of no one receiving a majority of the whole number

1825-26.

* See 23 Niles's Register, 317, Jan. 1823.

of district votes at the first election. But it was found impossible to bring two-thirds of either House to agree to this or any other plan, though a change of some sort was admitted to be desirable.*

Internal improvement under national auspices was, as already stated, the grand object of domestic policy which the Adams administration had set itself to promote. But the glow of the message did not stimulate Congress to corresponding effort, though many members not friendly to the administration were ready to support measures of this kind. A new bill for the Cumberland Road failed at the first session by a disagreement of the Houses; and as finally passed in 1827 the act simply appropriated $30,000 for repairs.† Subscriptions to stock in one or two of the new canal companies were permitted; public land was granted in aid of other special turnpike and canal enterprises; snags and obstructions were ordered to be removed from the Ohio river; a few new surveys were instituted, and a few roads authorized in the territories under earlier surveys, and lands were set apart for seminaries of learning in the territories of Michigan, Florida, and Arkansas.‡ The immediate benefit of appropriations of this character was reaped almost invariably by new and remote parts of the Union; though New England and the middle States received advantage from a general act for improving harbors and navigable rivers.§ The rhetoric of Adams's first message was much ridiculed, and his phrase "light-houses in the sky" was circulated by the enemies of the administration as though to denote the fanciful character of the projects upon which the public money was to be squandered.

1825–27.

Adams certainly committed himself very far in this first

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* 30 Niles's Register; 1 Benton's Thirty Years; Annals of Congress.

† See Annals of Congress; Act March 2, 1827.

‡ See sundry acts of 19th Congress in U. S. Stats. at Large; Acts May 13, May 18, 1826; Acts Jan. 29, March 2, March 3, 1827.

§ Act May 20, 1826.

annual message, proposing government aid, not to roads and canals alone, but to seminaries of science and learning, observatories, exploring expeditions. He meant an avowal of general principles, and made that avowal as broad as possible. Both Wirt and Barbour of the cabinet had objected to taking such strong ground in favor of internal improvements, dreading the effect likely to be produced in Virginia, where the administration was already represented as grasping for power. Clay himself thought the message went too far in this direction. A President ought not, he said, to make himself unpopular by recommending to Congress what was impracticable,—a national university, for instance. "I should not mean to recommend what is absolutely impracticable," was Adams's firm reply, "but I wish to look to a practicability of longer range than a single session of Congress."* After a brief experience he silently confessed his error, which, indeed, consisted in putting forward general propositions that could not be carried, but excited hostility by their announcement; for there are intellectual minds which delight in setting forth projects, but cannot bring any one of them to pass. In later messages he agreed to leave out disputable matters, believing, as he said, that the first and perhaps the last of his annual messages would be the only occasions proper for the avowal of general principles.†

Of foreign and international topics none at this time excited such deep interest as that of the Panama Congress. The project of holding a council of American republics at Panama to deliberate upon a continental policy and objects of common importance marks 1825.

* See 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1825.

† Diary, 1827. By December, 1826, Adams, in response to one who wished a particular canal recommended to Congress, said that he thought Congress ought to judge of the special objects for appropriation. As he had expressed himself fully on general principles, he would prefer to wait until called upon before giving sanction to any particular undertaking.

the high-water line of that zeal for the Spanish American cause which under the impulse of Bolivar's splendid victories, on the one hand, and Bourbonism and the Holy Alliance on the other, had been lashed into a sort of frenzy that could not at once subside. Lafayette, on his visit, sent Bolivar a portrait of Washington, with a gold medal; and Washington, Lafayette, and Bolivar were now commemorated through America as the three liberators of mankind. Early, then, in 1825 the new American states of Spanish origin planned themselves an assembly of deputies,—a modern amphictyonic council, as it were, to meet like that of the old Grecian republics, at an isthmus; or perhaps as a conference of the great powers of America at their own Aix-la-Chapelle, where they might confederate for liberty, as had European monarchs for despotism. The meeting was set for October; and in April, through the Mexican minister at Washington, the United States, eldest sister of the American republics, received a verbal invitation to be present. A congress of this character was in the direct line of Clay's former efforts to organize the new world against the old; for whatever of baser alloy might have mingled in his constant advocacy of the Spanish American cause, in season and out of season, during the past eight years, his fervor and broad philanthropy had guided the way like a pillar of fire. His genius was American, and so was his ambition. Eager to divert the public thought from criticisms upon the new administration and the manner in which he had come into office, he showed through the press how principles of maritime, belligerent, and neutral law which the United States wished to see universally established might be sanctioned by such a conference; he conversed at much length with the ministers of Mexico and Colombia at Washington, procuring further verbal invitations from Colombia and Central America. His zeal won the President's favor to the plan and dissolved the doubts of his fellow-advisers. By May it was decided in cabinet meeting to send representatives to Panama if the day of assembling could be fixed

April–May.

at a season later than at first proposed.* This was assented to, and the administration set to work to shape public opinion in favor of the proposed mission until Congress assembled. In his first message the President made formal announcement that the invitation to Panama from our sister republics had been accepted, and ministers would be sent accordingly.†

Unexpected difficulties occurred, however, in procuring the sanction of Congress, or rather of the Senate, to this unique mission. An increasing minority in both Houses meant to thwart the administration at all hazards; and as the Senate was now constituted, eight or ten members of hostile disposition, who were only restrained by the favor with which their constituents appeared to regard the project, lent secret countenance; without committing themselves, to an opposition which by the aid of their votes would necessarily turn the scales. It was prudent and proper in the President to take the Senate's advice before instituting the mission at all; but the manner of his doing so, the unqualified statement of the message that he had accepted and would commission ministers, was made cause of offence; and while the President, for his part, claimed the right to institute such a mission at discretion, without the previous advice and consent of Congress at all,—which right, nevertheless, he had waived in favor, first, of a decision by the Senate upon nominations, and, second, of a joint assent to the appropriation needful,—senators, on the other hand, insisted that when a new mission like this was to be instituted it was the creation of an office, not the fill-

* J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1825.

† President's Message, 1825. The first invitations to the United States were verbal, and as if to discover whether a formal invitation would be agreeable. Written invitations from Colombia, Mexico, and Central America followed some months later. Dipl. Corr.; 30 Niles's Reg., 98. Obregon was the Mexican minister at Washington, with whom Clay conversed in the first place on the subject; and Salazar, the minister from Columbia, who joined in the invitation. The formal invitations from their republics were given in November, at which time, also, Canaz gave the invitation from the government of Central America.

ing of a vacancy, and that the legislature had a voice in deciding upon the expediency of the office. Once more the President offended by his blunt statement of the executive position. The debate had begun in the Senate upon the nomination of the ministers; and as that body sat with closed doors, the liberty-loving public, already strongly prejudiced in favor of the continental council, soon showed signs of impatience at a delay whose motives secreted from sight ill report might explain injuriously. To lessen this disadvantage, the Senate, on motion of

1826. February. Van Buren, resolved to debate the question with open doors, "unless it shall appear that the publication of documents necessary to be referred to in debate will be prejudicial to existing negotiations." A copy of this resolve was sent to Adams, accompanied by another asking his opinion on that point; but he declined to give an opinion, and left the Senate to decide for itself a question involving what he called an unexampled departure from its own usage, "and upon the motives for which," not being himself informed of them, he did not feel himself "competent to decide." This expression, which was understood by senators to impute to them bad motives, as well as a disposition to violate rules, served in the end to widen the breach with the Executive, though eventually the Senate relinquished the idea of a public discussion, and contented itself with publishing speeches after the debate was over.*

A special message from the President to the Senate communicated the objects of the proposed Con-

1825. Dec. 26. gress, so far as the United States might lawfully engage in them without violating settled principles of neutrality or entering into entangling alliances hostile to other nations. They were as follows: (1) The establishment of liberal doctrines of commercial intercourse. (2) The consentaneous adoption of principles of maritime neutrality. (3) Assent to the doctrine that free

* Annals of Congress; 30 Niles's Register; newspapers of the day.

ships shall make free goods, and restricting the extent of blockades. (4) An agreement between all the parties represented at the meeting "that each will guard, by its own means, against the establishment of any future European colony within its borders." "This," adds the President, "was, more than two years since, announced by my predecessor to the world as a principle resulting from the emancipation of both the American continents. It may be so developed to the new southern nations that they will all feel it as an essential appendage to their independence." (5) Independently of all treaty, the exertion of a moral influence by the United States at such a meeting for the advancement of religious liberty. "Some of the southern nations are, even yet, so far under the dominion of prejudice that they have incorporated with their political institutions an exclusive church, without toleration of any other than the dominant sect." (6) An indirect influence which might be exercised upon any projects or purposes originating in the war in which the southern republics are still engaged, which might seriously affect the interests of this Union. (7) In fine, to give proofs of our good will to these southern republics by accepting their invitation to join them in the American Congress proposed.*

The fourth of these statements is remarkable as containing an exposition of the "Monroe doctrine," while that doctrine was fresh, from the pen of one most competent to make it; namely, in effect, that European exclusion from this hemisphere was to be the work not of the United States solely, as champion of the two Americas, but of each American republic primarily, as protector of its own confines, and upon its own conviction that the cause of emancipation and self-government rendered European exclusion necessary. This makes of the Monroe doctrine a rule prescribed not for conquest but for self-conquest. The sixth statement was purposely left vague in this message, but sundry papers submitted with it showed that among

* Executive documents; 30 Niles's Register.

other topics to which the Panama Congress was expected to direct its attention, was that of considering and settling continental relations with Cuba and Porto Rico. Upon this point, in truth, delicate arrangements were already pending; for Mexico and Colombia had projected a conquest of those islands for themselves, while our government was trying to save them to Spain by inducing Ferdinand, through the Emperor Alexander, to recognize the republics already virtually independent and end his fruitless American war.*

1826. Jan. 16. In January the Senate committee on foreign relations reported adversely upon the nominations of ministers to Panama; Macon, its chairman, presenting an elaborate opinion, drawn up by Tazewell of Virginia, which replied to the President's message, point by point, and stated with much force the objections to committing the United States to the Congress proposed.† In the first place, such a mission threatened a wide departure from our time-honored policy of avoiding all entangling alliances. Fervently as we had sympathized with these infant republics, whose independence we were the first nation to recognize, we had maintained an exact neutrality and forborne to take an active part in their struggle, notwithstanding our irritation with Spain was great. What new necessity had arisen to prompt us to establish new relations in violation of that policy? For, avow neutrality as we might, the conference would draw this country insensibly from that safe ground. Agents were to be endowed with undefined powers, to accomplish undefined objects, and mischievous consequences were likely to result if the measures proposed for conference should not meet the concurrence of all the parties assembled. They who had invited us displayed plainly enough in their own correspondence the prime wish to make "an eventual alliance" of the States to be represented at Panama; in fact, a secret compact to be immediately useful in the prosecution of war

* See J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, Dec. 1825.

† 30 Niles's Register; Annals of Congress.

against their own mother country. As to the objects proposed, not by these Spanish republics but by our President in his message, there was nothing to show that they would be admitted in the Congress as fit matters of discussion; nor were these independent States likely to adopt in concert, and without compulsion, principles affecting their separate commerce, religion, and internal concerns, which treaties, negotiated after the usual diplomatic forms, might not procure far more readily and with less offence to jealous powers across the seas. The very situation of Cuba and Porto Rico was an inducement to the United States not to change the attitude of impartial spectator, by which we reserved ourselves for a more serious emergency. In fine, the idea of European encroachment or colonization no longer existed; no common subject now remained of sufficient magnitude to require a movement so novel and so startling to the other hemisphere as the assembling of a Congress of all the American republics; and should such an exigency hereafter occur, the United States, the oldest and most experienced republic of them all, would probably take the initiative and send out invitations consistent with its own friendship and respect, and upon terms the most fair and liberal.

It was in vain to attempt thus to quench the popular passion in favor of the Panama mission. The very novelty, the rashness of the experiment captivated our American youth. While at Washington the Senate with closed doors deferred action upon the Macon report, the House, which sided with the Executive, called for the papers. Not to precipitate a public discussion in the other branch, the Senate yielded, many members against their better judgment; Macon's report was voted down, and the persons nominated (as to whose fitness there was no objection) were confirmed, after a session of fourteen hours, by a fair majority.* The sum of

Feb. 26. March 5.

March 14.

* See Annals of Congress, 1825–26; 30 Niles's Register *passim*. On the 14th of March the decisive vote was taken in the Senate. One minister was confirmed by 27 to 17, the other by 26 to 18, Benton changing his vote.

$40,000 was next appropriated for outfit, salaries, and expenses by a bill which quickly passed both houses and received the President's signature.*

The victory of the administration was, after all, a barren one; and the condescension with which a nation of superior intelligence and experience joined on a loose invitation the prearranged conference of hobbledehoy republics, less as dictator than disciple, added nothing to its prestige in this hemisphere, but rather widened the difficulties which jealousy had aroused in the other. The Panama Congress, intended by revolutionists in the first place as a means of consolidating their struggle against the mother country, we, on our part, approached from a totally different standpoint, and with no genuine interest at stake. They looked beyond a mere diplomatic gathering; while our government denied all power of a majority in such a Congress to rule the minority or to impose compacts of binding force outside the separate channels of constitutional assent. Incongruous under any aspect, the whole project proved abortive. To our delegates who were invited, England and the Netherlands added delegates on their part who were not, and the bubble blown out too far burst speedily. The Panama Congress met in June, and after a short session, thinly attended, adjourned to meet again in 1827 at the village of Tacubaya, near the city of Mexico. The United States had not been here represented; for of the two envoys appointed and confirmed, Richard C. Anderson, our minister at Colombia, was attacked, while on his way to the isthmus from Bogota, by a malignant fever which terminated fatally; while John Sergeant of Philadelphia, delayed by various impediments, had not undertaken to attend. Still impressed with the expediency of the mission, the President despatched Sergeant to attend the adjourned meeting at Tacubaya; and Monroe having declined a commission, Poinsett, our minister resident at Mexico, was appointed to the vacancy caused by Ander-

1826. June.

* Act May 4, 1826.

son's death. Among other subjects, Clay instructed Poinsett to propose at this time the purchase of Texas.* But the Tacubaya Congress did not assemble at all; and Sergeant, who was a man of dispassionate judgment, reported on his return home in the summer of 1827 the final collapse of a continental council, projected at least a hundred years too early. Closer contact with the southern revolutionists had, at all events, the effect of dispelling that false medium through which we had viewed them. Bolivar, the greatest of their heroes, shrunk in comparison with Washington and Lafayette; and as revolution brought on counter-revolution, new dissensions arising in these volcanic republics, it was forced upon us that friendship, but not brotherhood, encouragement, but not alliance, was for the present our only honorable relation with Spanish Americans; for their apprenticeship in the school of liberty was necessarily a long one. And this lesson was, after all, to the United States the only positive gain resulting from the Panama mission.† 1827.

Two topics proposed for discussion in the Panama Congress, but not pointedly mentioned by the President, irritated our slaveholders. One related to common measures for suppressing the slave trade; the other, to the future relations of American powers with the government of Hayti, the old St. Domingo. Ever since negro insurrection had wrested that island, or its greater part, from European rule, the policy of our government had been an anomalous one. We traded with Hayti, we bought her coffee and paid for it, but no ministers or consuls were interchanged, no diplomatic relations of any kind established. Non-recognition was our settled policy, in this instance, and that because the peace of the slaveholding states forbade the reception of black ambassadors and consuls, and the

* See 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 240.

† See as to Panama Mission 28–30 Niles's Register *passim;* Annals of Congress; 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; 1 Benton's Thirty Years; instructions published in 36 Niles's Register. And *cf.* reports in Senate and House, 30 Niles's Register, 100, 108.

parade of an example which might incite our slaves to murder their masters. Quite recently a well-laid plot of negro insurrection in South Carolina had been detected and punished; and under a northern President, slaveholders were extremely sensitive.* Britain's energy in the suppression of the slave trade alarmed them; they feared that some international alliance to extirpate slavery would be the next step taken; and hence the first convention ever presented from a Spanish American State had been lately rejected by the Senate because its purpose was co-operation with the United States in treating the African slave-trader as a pirate.†

It was during the Panama debates that John Randolph, now translated to the Senate for a brief space to fill the place of Barbour, who had resigned to enter the cabinet, pronounced that bitter philippic which provoked a duel with the Secretary of State. Delivered in secret session and imperfectly reported, the exact language of the speech was matter of hearsay; but he made no doubt a point of the alleged bargain between Clay and Adams to charge them with an undue effort to get up a popular question for the sake of turning aside the public displeasure. The verbal offence consisted first in asserting his belief that the invitation to Panama had been manufactured at the State Department; next in referring to the recent coalition of Adams and Clay as that of "puritan and blackleg." Clay sent a challenge, giving to Randolph the opportunity to disclaim or else stand, if he chose, upon a senator's immunity for words spoken in

* See 30 Niles's Register, 100; 1 Benton's Thirty Years. It was inadmissible, argued Benton, that our fixed policy as to Hayti should be discussed in a foreign assembly, and especially in that proposed for Panama, and "made up of five nations who have already put the black man upon an equality with the white, not only in their constitutions but in real life; five nations who have at this moment (at least one of them) black generals in their armies and mulatto senators in their congresses."

† See convention with Colombia submitted to the Senate by President Monroe in February, 1825, and rejected March 8, 1825; 28 Niles's Register.

debate; Randolph would do neither; and they met with pistols above Little Falls bridge, within the State of Virginia, their native soil. Clay was in deadly earnest; Randolph, on the other hand, wavered in purpose, until the accidental discharge of his own weapon while they were taking position, a most annoying circumstance, determined him to return his antagonist's fire. Shots were exchanged without personal injury. But scarcely had Clay's second fire knocked the gravel ten paces distant when Randolph, firing in the air, advanced with pleasant salutation and offered his hand. Clay grasped it warmly, meeting him half way, to the real delight of all the seconds and bystanders. The duelling party at once left the ground with hearts lighter than they brought. Cards were exchanged between the principals a day or two later, and their social relations courteously restored.* 1826. April 8.

This last of "high-toned duels," as Benton, one of the spectators, expresses it, ended more happily in averting bloodshed than in effacing the bold epithet which Clay's adversary had branded into the administration. For picturesque abuse Randolph stands unrivalled among our orators, because his invective was in the vein of a scholar who drew upon humorists and men of the world like Fielding and Smollett, rather than romancers like Scott. Blifil and Black George supplied the type of his "blackleg" allusion; and another passage recalls Trunnion, where it is said, Randolph spoke of "this being, so brilliant, yet so corrupt, which like a rotten mackerel by moonlight shined and stunk." Randolph was still a figure in Congressional life, and strangers at the capitol strained their necks in the gallery to see him as he marched down the aisle accoutred in blue riding-coat with buckskin breeches, threw his cap and gloves upon his desk, and prepared, as a dismounted jockey, to listen to the debate he had interrupted. He understood, like most brilliant talkers, how to impose his attainments upon admir-

* 1 Benton's Thirty Years; also Clay's Private Correspondence, 145, 146.

ing listeners, and forced to groove out his own channel of reputation he would play off his eccentricities with no little art to increase his influence. He was full of theatrical mannerisms; would slap his pockets in speaking of finance, or hold up a text-book to enforce his comments upon the constitution. His oratory consisted usually of rambling remarks pitched slightly above the level of easy conversation; and as he spoke he would change his position from side to side, walking about the aisle and sometimes lolling against the outer railing which enclosed the members' desks; nor were the tones of his voice unpleasantly shrill, unless he became excited. But age, dissipation, and disease wore slowly down a useless life, and engendered that state of mind which borders upon insanity. In a few vivid passages his genius gleamed mischievously out like a Lucifer in armor passing some sunny aperture in his dark and fathomless descent.* But to those long familiar with the man and his mannerisms, Randolph's general discourse had grown tedious. He was considered "a nuisance and a curse" in Congress. His long and diffuse remarks, crowded with allusions to everything except the business in hand, and tacked together by the "Yes, sir," or "no, sir," constantly interjected, grew more and more incoherent, staggering in logic, delirious in climax, breathing alcohol. There was sparkle, no doubt, even in the dregs of a mind so brilliant that (to quote Randolph's own complaint) all the bastard wit of Congress for thirty years was fathered upon him; but in these days, while the amused but half uneasy gallery tittered or applauded as the melodrama went on, day after day, members would one by one retire, until the Senate had to adjourn without a quorum. The decorum of this quiet chamber was outraged as never before; and Virginia was mortified at the unseemly exhibition. As a thorn in the flesh of an unpopular administration, Randolph was not to

* We may recall, for instance, a speech delivered by Randolph in 1824 on internal improvements, which prophesied slave emancipation as the future result of arming the national government with the colossal powers it now sought.

be despised; and on this account, perhaps, Calhoun bore gently with him, watching from his chair the flow of poesy and vituperation which the rules of the Senate, so he alleged, forbade him to interrupt.*

Did Calhoun, as he sat rigid and statue-like in the Vice-President's chair, listening with pale face, lips compressed, and scornful eyes, his thick hair brushed boldly back from his imperious forehead, extract ideas from this tangled monologue for his own political guidance? And had he already begun to reconstruct his theory of American government so as to place the State above the nation? At all events, it is claimed by Randolph's latest biographer † that Randolph himself, even while despised in his own eyes, organized the south as a distinct power, and made Calhoun his convert. With like foresight, it may be added, Calhoun and Randolph, the later and earlier sophist of the pro-slavery school, took care to attach to their persons young men who were likely to rise to influence in their several homes, and, after a fascinating strain which pictured slaveholders as chained to some necessity by a fate which they might deplore but could not avert, set forth the dark issue as one of life or death, wherein every sentiment of chivalry and humanity required two races to be kept, the one above and the other below the other. Each set the example of kindness to slaves, and appreciated heartily the simple and childish tenderness which was yielded in return. Each half inclined to emancipate; but each, with characteristic temper, spurned the thought that a southerner's best impulse should be aided from without. What existed must continue to exist, so they argued, and to preserve the existence of slavery was their own right; for never in history

* See Niles's Register, 1826; biographies of Randolph by Garland and Henry Adams. In the course of the next Congress the Senate, in 1828, gave to the Vice-President concurrent power in calling members to order, subject to appeal from his decision. Calhoun declared that he now considered himself instructed on this point.

† See Adams's John Randolph; Final Notes.

had two distinct races occupied the soil together, except as master and slave.* State rights afforded thus a barricade whenever the south should be driven to cover; and to consolidate southern influence and the slave power, either for offensive or defensive warfare, as circumstances might demand, was the work which Randolph began and Calhoun completed.

Of the present State rights tendency at the south symptoms appeared in a conflict which had lately arison between Georgia and the national Executive over the removal of the Creek Indians from the limits of that State. By a compact with Georgia, in the year 1802, the United States had become bound, in consideration of the cession of western territory since constituting the States of Alabama and Mississippi, to extinguish the Indian title within the domains of the State whenever it could be done peaceably and reasonably. Many treaties had since been made, and many millions of square miles purchased, the State of Georgia continually pressing the United States to buy more rapidly. In 1824 the Cherokees, who, together with the Creeks, occupied chiefly the soil in question, declared they would sell no more. The white inhabitants of the State were enraged, and, reproaching the national Executive as though in some underhand way this obstinancy had been instigated at the War Department, they demanded a fulfilment of the compact, even, if need be, to expelling the Cherokees by force from the State.† To allay the irritation a treaty was negotiated at Indian Springs in February, 1825, with the Creeks, their chief, General McIntosh, signing it; and by this treaty a cession was made to the United States of all the Creek country in Georgia, and several millions of acres besides in the State of Alabama. Complaints followed this treaty to Washington as one concluded by McIntosh with-

1825. February.

* See Quincy's Figures of the Past; interview with Randolph.
† See J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, March, 1824.

out the authority of his nation. The circumstances under which it was procured impugned certainly the fairness, if not the good faith, of the national commissioners, both of whom were Georgia men; but when it came President Monroe could not withhold it from the Senate, and no one in that body exposing its injustice, the Indian Springs treaty was ratified by a large vote. But the Creeks at once resisted; a party of four hundred men surrounded the house of McIntosh, set it on fire, and put him to death; and Indian delegates arrived at Washington not long after Adams's inauguration to protest against the enforcement of a treaty which was steeped in fraud. Adams became impressed with the conviction that the Indian Springs treaty ought neither to have been made nor ratified as it stood; and, suspending all summary proceedings for enforcing it, he ordered General Gaines with troops to the scene, instructing him, first of all, to assemble the Indians and urge their assent to the cession.* A collision with Governor Troup of Georgia at once ensued; for the authorities of this State, in order to forestall opposition to the treaty, had, it seems, proceeded in hot haste to take possession and expel the Creeks from the disputed territory under the letter of the cession. Gaines had been sent to consult with the Governor, and, if necessary, call for the Georgia militia; but an angry correspondence arose between them, both parties being at fault. Troup haughtily requested the Secretary of War to arrest and punish Gaines, which Barbour declined to do, at the same time showing how far the conduct of that officer was disapproved. All Georgia was in a flame to find a federal force sent without peremptory orders to execute the McIntosh treaty; and Troup, one of those fiery southrons to whom bluster was natural, called on his people to "stand by their arms," rashly declaring his resolution to survey the Creek lands, cost what it might. In compliance with this proclamation, the Georgia

April.

May.

May-August.

* Ib., 1825; Executive documents.

legislature assembled and passed an act to dispose of and distribute the lands lately acquired. This act treated the whole cession as subject to the State jurisdiction. But the treaty of Indian Springs guaranteed to the Indians undisturbed possession until September, 1826; and this led the President to inform Governor Troup, through the Secretary of War, that he should expect all surveys to be suspended until Congress decided the matter. Gaines had several interviews with the Creeks, and, while assuring them of national protection, urged them to accede to the treaty of Indian Springs. They refused, but in open council deputed chiefs to proceed to Washington and negotiate further.*

June.

The Creek chiefs and leading braves being assembled at Washington city, the President in January concluded with them a new treaty, by which the treaty of Indian Springs was annulled, and a cession of more moderate scope procured in its place. This treaty was submitted to the Senate. Anxious to allay the discontent of Georgia as well as to do justice to all the parties concerned, Adams had tried to negotiate a full purchase as before; but the Creeks were found obstinate on that point, until, the Senate committee reporting against ratifying the treaty as it stood, further negotiations were had, which resulted in a supplemental article granting all that was desired. The full treaty, as thus amended, ceded the entire Creek country in Georgia, and bound the Creeks within that State to emigrate to a new home beyond the Mississippi. This the Senate ratified by an emphatic majority; and Congress appropriating the needful sums for carrying the treaty into effect,† the Georgia disquiet for a time ended. These new Indian negotiators appear to have been quite as ready as McIntosh himself to defraud their nation in the sale; for it is said that they had agreed to divide two-thirds of the

1825. Nov. 1826. Jan.

March.

April 22.

* See 28 and 29 Niles's Register; 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs.

† See Act May 22, 1826.

treaty money among themselves and a few outside favorites. To thwart the design Congress directed that the whole fund should be distributed to the Creek nation convened in full council.*

Indeed fraud, indolence, and utterly dissolute habits seemed the only sure lessons our civilization had imprinted in the Indian nature, wherever the races came in close contact, after all the long years of effort to reclaim these aborigines and set them in the direction of true intellectual progress and enlightenment. Whether the chief fault lay in our inconsistent policy of training and at the same time driving them off, in teaching agriculture and then ousting them from their improved lands, or, as was likely enough, in their own indocile character and intractable wildness, the discouraging result was the same. As well might the grizzly bear be domesticated as these children of nature, whose cubs, whatever pains might be taken to educate them, escaped when full grown into the forest, and cast the arts of peace contemptuously aside. They found little of solace in their subduers' society, and still less of dignity. What was hardest to reach in the Indian was a human heart responsive to benevolence; for hate, resentment, ferocity, treachery, seemed ever to predominate in that locked-up breast over the kindly affections. Hence of mutual trust and sympathy in our intercourse there was little or none. The white man darted a look of keen suspicion as his hand doled out the rations; the red man, impassive and reticent, guarded his own designs; capable doubtless of respect, reverence, superstitious dread, the savage warrior's concession to a mightier force, but neither of love nor of docile submission. In this respect the Indian greatly differed from the African, who was tractable, loving, and fond of imitating those he served. The copper-colored tribes disdained to be moulded into servants or imitators; and even in their squalor they herded apart like gypsies, and yielded only to civilization what the baser ap-

* Ib. And see 1 Benton's Thirty Years; Annals of Congress.

petites compelled. They taught their conquerors nothing, and learned from them nothing to be grateful for. They could not be, at the present stage at least, our fellow-citizens; their vicinity as neighbors was constantly disquieting; and hence we practised philanthropy at a distance, and through agencies whose actual dealings emitted a fetid and far-off savor of corruption. The Indians did not multiply in numbers; indeed, statistics justified the belief that they were positively decreasing. They were like wild vines in a cultivated orchard, needing to be engrafted on a healthier stock. Their civilized descendants might some day, perhaps, amalgamate with the whites. But like a feeble and inferior plant, the Indian race would disappear as the area of civilization extended. Its doom was already written in the setting sun, and it would soon exist only in the annals of history.

No administration had treated the Indians with more unvarying kindness than Monroe's; and from Calhoun's reports while Secretary of War, one may gather the same ideas of practical benevolence towards this unfortunate race which are put forth at the present day. Annual appropriations were made for civilizing the tribes, and the charity was dispensed, as far as possible, through private societies and philanthropists, whose views on the subject were carefully regarded. The Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, most of the remnants of the Six Nations, and the Senecas and Shawnees at upper Sandusky, exhibited signs of progress; and the Cherokees most of all, for among that people flourished agriculture and schools for teaching the Indian youth, and that nation really appeared to be on the increase.* But all the while Indian treaties were made; and Indian tribes of Illinois or the southwest selling out large tracts which the white man never coveted without obtaining, began to move across the Mississippi to enjoy fresh hunting-grounds and the primitive savage life unmolested. Miserable enough were the remnants of such tribes still to be seen hover-

* See Secretary of War's Report, Jan. 1820.

ing upon the outskirts of society in the woods of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi; though the Chickasaws and Cherokees, less debauched by drink than either Creek or Choctaw, still preserved something of their original character, costume, and manners; some of their chiefs being even wealthy so as to employ negro slaves on their fields of Indian corn. Indians contiguous to the whites soon became inordinate drinkers; too often tempted with "fire water" by their unscrupulous neighbors for the sake of duping them into some unequal bargain and keeping them debtors. Hideous figures dressed in rags and caring for nothing but to be under the delirium of liquor, they wandered listlessly about the log huts, their frames unnerved by debauch, their eyes half closed, beggars where in former times they might have terrified with the tomahawk. Or in some more remote settlement, sitting in the woods at night round a large fire, cross-legged, their children and submissive wives behind them, wrapped in blankets and shivering with cold, the dusky warriors might be seen neighing in half-broken sentences, until the whiskey bottle was produced and passed about, after which they would howl like hyenas and gesticulate upon the night air until at the morning's glow each suffered his slavish squaw to lead him away. Better far did the Indian appear, when, mounted, bare-backed and without stirrup, upon his fiery little horse, hunting the stag, he pressed forward, stopping not for stream or fallen tree, but keeping his seat firmly and gracefully, and raised his cocked rifle with one hand, while he held his reins fast in the other.

Trade with the Indians, though surrounded with the strictest safeguards, ran easily into cheating, stealing, and abuse. And hence it was that in 1822 Congress broke up the factory system, devised under Washington in 1796, for supplying the Indians with necessaries at cost rates, and taking in return their furs and peltries.* The long toss of our national policy terminated in the Indian troubles in Georgia; and President Monroe's last advice to Congress, after eight

* 1 Benton's Thirty Years.

years of patient dealing with the vexed problem, was to remove the nation's wards from the lands they now occupied and the neighborhood of white society to the far west, there to be incorporated under some distinct territorial government, relieved of State interference and the pressure of intruding settlers.* Experience had clearly demonstrated that in their present state the Indians could not be incorporated in masses in any form into our system, and that under the dangers to which they were now exposed, under causes which it was becoming impossible to control, their degradation and rapid extermination were inevitable. To this proposal Adams and Jackson in turn acceded; the former upon the advice of Barbour, his Secretary of War, a southern man of generous and humane feelings, who had managed in person the Creek negotiation; and acceding, as he was forced to own, only because no better solution of the sad problem offered itself.† The policy was made as palatable to the red man as possible. To every warrior of the Creek nation who should move to the west of the Mississippi within two years was offered a rifle, a butcher-knife, a blanket, a brass kettle, and a beaver-trap, besides provisions and the means of transportation.‡ Nothing was to be done without the voluntary consent of the Indians themselves, as the plan originally proposed.§ But after Jackson came into power, such unwilling tribes as remained felt the touch of compulsion; and a treaty made in 1835 with a fraction of the Cherokees of Georgia gave color for marching United States troops into the Indian country and driving out the last remnant of the red race, thus relieving our southwestern slave States of what they had long deemed an incubus upon their growth and prosperity.‖

1835–38.

The removal of our whole Indian population to the wild

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* See special message, Jan. 27, 1825.

† 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1826; Secretary of War's Report, 1826.

‡ Act May 20, 1826.

§ Secretary Barbour's Report, 1826.

‖ See next volume; 1 Benton's Thirty Years; Annals of Congress.

prairies west of the Mississippi, there to be independently managed by the nation apart from State influence, was thus a topic of rising interest, and it seemed as if the pathway of the pale-faces was to be cleared by driving the black men in one direction and the red in the other. At this time the whole number of Indians within the United States was estimated in round numbers at 300,000, of whom 120,000 resided in the several States and territories. It was a total population somewhat less than that of the State of Maine. Doubtless their civilization was still to be attempted in the new exchange of homes proposed. Agents and missionaries sought to inculcate the refined arts and religious principles. Schools were to be provided for the young. "The Great Father at Washington sent milk cows, draught oxen, farming utensils, and instructions. But the cows were killed to get at the milk, the oxen cut up for beef, the ploughs broken and thrown aside, and, instead of feeling grateful to the government for educating his children, the warrior thought he should be paid for sending them to school."* With gifts, rations, annuities, we had already pauperized these ragged wards of ours; and one owned a thrill of delight in turning from the drunken and effeminate Creek to watch the untutored Osage, that better ideal of the Indian warrior, as he chased the bison over the rolling prairie, a child of nature and a plunderer to the last. These new Indian reservations afforded a respite rather than a permanent relief from white society; for sooner or later, and before the nation had fulfilled its self-imposed task of civilizing, some pioneer spy would penetrate the valley and discover its adaptation to the wants of the white settlers; then followed intrusion, resistance, massacre, the national policy turning by stress of circumstances from precepts to powder, from civilizing to procuring a cession. And thus is the story of Indian wrong repeated to this day.

1825–27.

* See Latrobe's Travels, 1832–33.

Nevertheless, it was impossible that Indians should exist as independent communities in the midst of our civilized society. The Cherokees, of all tribes within the American Union the most nearly assimilating to the whites in tastes and mode of life, had by 1826 become a compact and sedentary people, raisers of cotton, slaveholders, and rapidly grew in wealth and prosperity. Those preferring the nomadic life had long since crossed the Mississippi, and were known as western Cherokees; and continued cessions had reduced the original Cherokee territory on this side to a mountainous tract chiefly comprised within the limits of Georgia. These eastern Cherokees had come to be governed chiefly by a few whites of Indian mixture known as half breeds, who in Georgia and Alabama asserted their own peculiar right of dominion. This very success, however, had proved an obstacle to keeping the Indians in a white community while preserving the race distinctions. States which had simply the scattered remnants of a tribe to deal with exerted sway with comparative ease. Until the Indians are gradually brought under our laws the effort to civilize them, so wrote Calhoun in 1820, can be only partially successful.* Whether to attempt something of this kind by breaking up their tribal relations and incorporating them into several States, was discussed by Adams and his advisers; but then, as ever since, the obstacles to such a policy were thought insuperable.

1826–27. Controversy with Georgia did not cease upon the ratification of the new Creek treaty. It now became necessary to run a boundary between Georgia and Alabama. Commissioners were appointed on the part of each State, but they disagreed, and an *ex parte* line was run on the authority of Georgia. Upon a small strip of Creek land there was a contest; and the Georgia surveyor under authority of his State, attempted to set it off in defiance of the Indian remonstrance. The President, whose

* Secretary Calhoun's Report, January, 1820.

language throughout had been as temperate and conciliating as Troup's was peremptory and disrespectful, now determined to maintain the faith of the nation, and its unqualified power to control treaties and commerce with the independent Indian tribes. No State had claimed before the right to interfere with this prerogative of the United States. Orders, therefore, were sent to the district attorney and marshal to arrest and prosecute those who, contrary to the treaty of 1826 and the laws regulating Indian intercourse, should engage in surveying the lands in dispute. Troup, instead of submitting, returned a direct defiance. He instructed the State authorities to take measures for liberating any surveyors who might be interrupted in their work, and arresting all United States officers offending in the premises. He ordered the State militia to be ready to repel all hostile invasion, and announced that any attempt to sustain the Indians by force he should consider an attack upon the territory, the people, and the sovereignty of Georgia.

The President submitted the new issue to Congress by a special message. An obligation higher than that of human authority would, he declared, compel him, if resisted, to use the military army of the Union. Upon this message arose a debate in the House, in which Webster came firmly to the support of the Executive, rebuking Forsyth, who undertook to defend the action of Georgia. "I will not be dictated to," said Webster; "high words will not terrify." Committees in both Houses reported the facts, and sustained the President in resolves which nevertheless asked that every exertion be made to get the Indian claim relinquished. The House committee thought it unlikely that Georgia would fight the Union for that barren little strip, but if so, they hoped the laws of the land would be maintained and the faith of the Union preserved inviolate. Troup, finding that the Secretary of War was trying to procure the lands left out of the new treaty, had already expressed his satisfaction and dropped the language of bravado. He had never

1827. Feb.

March.

intended, he said, to counteract the measures of the United States by force, but to meet coercion in a military manner. And thus subsided for the present the Georgia disturbance.

A low type of civilization was furnished by these white dwellers in the neighborhood of the southwestern Indians. Here the traveller found rude and wretched entertainment. In the middle of the table was placed a bottle of whiskey, to which host and hostess helped themselves freely before tasting the solid viands. Pigs' feet pickled in vinegar were served first; then came bacon swimming in molasses, which the landlady esteemed a choice delicacy, followed by milk and bread, which the guest was expected to wash down with whiskey. In the public room travellers and loungers sat before a large fire, rocking backward and forward in wooden chairs, their dirty feet set firmly against the fireplace horizontally from their eyes. The citizen wore very large trousers, gray woollen stockings, short boots with long iron spurs, a frock coat with pockets in the side, in which he kept his hands constantly concealed, a low cravat, a high loose collar which half hid the ears, and a soft, dark-brown beaver hat, which fitted in whatever shape it was put on the head. His air was haughty as he looked on a stranger; but beginning conversation upon the weather, he passed to business and politics, and showed often a surprising acquaintance with not only the agriculture and resources of his State, but its laws and civil institutions. For politics were well discussed in the remote backwoods. In Alabama murders were not uncommon. Two gamblers in Montgomery having quarrelled, one attacked the other in the middle of the street, and wounded him dangerously; the adversary stabbed him with his bowie-knife, and both expired together. Down the Alabama river to Mobile the traveller proceeded by a steamboat, which stopped constantly to take bales of cotton aboard, making a long and tedious voyage. Nestling as close as possible to the high bluff, the vessel received its cargo. The bales dropped from above, rolled over stones and bushes

till they reached the deck, which shook under the weight.*

The fiery Georgian was a first product of the new school of statesmen now appearing in all the most headstrong of slave States; for at last the baneful heresy of "State rights" reared its head in that section for the first time since 1799, having more lately run its course in New England. The powers "reserved to the States respectively or to the people" under the federal constitution afford a precious bulwark against a central tyranny, and may yet be appealed to when the minority are stripped of their rights. But now the State rights theory was to be perverted to the prop of slave institutions, according as their temporary interests might suggest. It was more than to set up the strict interpretation of national functions against the broad one; it involved a separation of the strands which bind indissolubly the States and the people together. The social condition of slavery had by this time engendered a distinct industrial interest in a well-defined quarter of the Union, and produced, where that industry was strongly compacted and no middle class existed, a class of leaders, arrogant, hot-blooded, and impatient of constraint. They were jealous of the advancing numbers and superior wealth of the north, and at the same time affected to despise them as plodding money-makers, believing them cowardly at heart. Free labor they disdained, and laborers in their midst too poor to own slaves, though nominally free, were without social or political influence in the State, and depended upon the aristocracy, which ruled without a counterpoise. They wanted their own system to expand and gain firmness, and yet saw that Christendom was growing eager to extirpate it. They felt as if they had a cause of their own to maintain against civilization itself. To such men the election of a northern President—a second Adams, a New England man with anti-slavery tenden-

* See Arfwedson's Travels, 1832-24.

cies—was deeply humiliating, and they were alarmed the more as they saw his policy develop in the direction of centralization. Their first thought was to barricade against all national interference with slave labor, to establish the rule that they must be let alone. To slave-trade treaties, conferences over Hayti and Cuba, and philanthropic schemes of all kinds for the benefit of the negro race they opposed boldly and almost rebelliously the idea of non-interference. Thus, Hayne and Berrien, in the Panama debates, took the ground that slavery must be treated as purely a domestic question; and as to foreign nations, the United States must not permit it to be touched. "The moment the federal government shall make the unhallowed attempt to interfere with the domestic concerns of Southern States," was Hayne's emphatic warning, "those States will consider themselves driven from the Union." * Even the harmless experiment of colonizing the blacks could not be permitted. Tyler, as governor of the State which first proposed such a scheme to the public, avowed his belief that the United States had no constitutional right to aid the American Colonization Society; and this view the legislatures of both Georgia and South Carolina likewise maintained.†

But it was not upon the stability of slave institutions alone that the general government was thus tutored. The Georgians had determined, right or wrong, to expel the Indians from their borders; and how little heed they were disposed to pay to the nation we have already shown. As soon as the President's first message to Congress was found to commit the administration strongly in favor of internal improvements, the legislature of Virginia loudly protested. And when, still later, Congress took up the subject of protection, and a new tariff act was pending, the legislatures of Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia were seen loudly remonstrating in

1826.

1827.

* See Annals of Congress; 30 Niles's Register, 171.

† Niles's Register, 1826, 1827.

concert. Internal improvements were unconstitutional. A tariff for protection was unconstitutional. During all these State proceedings, in which leaders rather than the body of the citizens took the responsibility, two facts were chiefly manifest: a recurrence on grounds of reason to the old resolutions of '98 and '99, and to the theory that the constitution is a compact; moreover, a disobedient spirit. They were insolent to the national Executive. They threatened Congress. They seemed willing, if need be, to break up the Union, and calculated the advantages and disadvantages of remaining.

South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia were identified with these menacing protests. Virginia, under Governor Giles, aspired to lead the movement, which was partly political, and partly a matter of temperament. Both Jefferson and Madison were consulted by the party chiefs of the State when the issue was presented by the President's first message. Neither Jefferson nor Madison approved the bold scope of Adams's policy. At that time the popular current through the Union in favor of internal improvement seemed irresistible; but Congress showed a momentary hesitation. Jefferson drafted a document which might fit the emergency, and submitted it in confidence to Madison; but the latter disapproving, he suppressed it.* His own idea had been to set an example of temperate protest, in contrast with the violence of Georgia's opposition on the Indian question, and by a bolt shot critically to break the coalition which supported the improvement policy. But Madison favored no line of remonstrance whatever beyond the usual one of instructing the State representatives how to vote; and when at a later stage of the crisis Virginia was to take a stand, he urged her leaders not to enter the labyrinth of resistance without a clue to guide them. And

1825. December.

1827. February.

* See Jefferson's and Madison's Writings, December, 1825. The paper may be seen in Jefferson's Works; it makes a solemn declaration and protest against the constitutional right to appropriate for internal improvements.

he justly recalled the distinction between the case where government opposes the people, and where government has States and the people on its side; and again between the exercise of unconstitutional powers, and what is more nearly the abuse of constitutional power.* Jefferson himself had not advised rash measures. Lamenting in his peculiar strain of invective the rapid strides the federal government was now taking towards the consolidation in itself of all powers, domestic and foreign,—the new President's doctrines, the decisions of the Supreme Court, the misconstruction of our fundamental compact,—his advice nevertheless was patience and endurance; not to "stand to our arms," like the hot-headed Troup, but to separate only when the sole alternatives left should be dissolution or abject submission to a government without limitation of powers. Be watchful, he writes, to note every material usurpation, denounce it in peremptory terms, protest so that present submission shall not serve as a precedent. I would go still further, he adds, and give to the federal member, by a regular amendment of the constitution, a right to make roads and canals, provided corrupt practices in Congress are guarded against, and the moneys so employed are proportionately distributed, with due regard to the consent and jurisdiction of the State concerned. "This is the course which I think safest and the best as yet." †

Nor did Jefferson wish the lead in this direction taken by Virginia, where opposition was already thought commonplace. A disposition to dissent from the President's views soon showed itself elsewhere. New England felt little real interest in internal improvements, having no great work to be fostered by the general government. New York having already completed her canal system without such assistance, Van Buren and Clinton both took ground against the proposed national policy. South Carolina set herself likewise in opposition. Now ought his own State,

* Madison's Writings, February, 1827.
† Jefferson's Works; letter to Giles, Dec. 26, 1825.

thought Jefferson, to follow in the same line of opposition and back them firmly.* This was the last advice Jefferson ever gave upon politics of the day.

The legislature of Virginia could not be induced to re-elect John Randolph to the Senate after his indecent exhibition. For the new term, therefore, beginning March 4th, 1827, John Tyler, governor of the State, was chosen. A man opposed to the administration was desired; but a man of business, rather than one of words. 1827. January. In politics Tyler had been one of the Crawford party, and his record strongly committed him to the new doctrines of strict construction.

Great was the astonishment in the State a few weeks later, when a letter came out in print which he had written to Clay in March, 1825, praising his whole conduct in transferring his influence to Adams and accepting office under him, as evincing the most entire patriotism. "Instead of seeing in your course on the late Presidential question," were his words, "aught morally or politically wrong, I am, on the contrary, fully impressed with the belief that the United States owes you a deep debt of gratitude, resulting as it did in the speedy settlement of that distracting subject." "I do not believe that the sober and reflecting people of Virginia would have been so far dazzled by military renown as to have conferred their suffrages upon a mere soldier,—one acknowledged on all hands to be of little value as a civilian." † Tyler explained himself to his excited constituents. He had, indeed, like many others of Crawford's supporters, preferred Adams to Jackson; but he had not compromised himself with the present administration, and his future career would be determined by his sense of duty. The explanation had to serve; for his choice to the Senate could not be reversed by the legislature. Tyler was annoyed that this letter should have seen

* Jefferson's Works. January-February, 1826.

† See Clay's Private Correspondence.

the light, and perhaps he had written it under too hasty an impulse; but the use Clay made of it in his own defence was perfectly natural, and its whole expression was that of spontaneous confidence in one who was harshly reproached, nor did it contain a hint of secrecy from beginning to end.* This incident, otherwise trivial, may afford some insight into a character which, a few years later, accident, or the dispensation of God lifted into a commanding influence ruinous to those who trusted it.

Transferred to a dignity which left him ample leisure to plan his future, Tyler now vacated the executive chair, and Giles was elected his successor. Giles, who had long ceased to be a figure in national politics, was splenetic and quarrelsome in his old age, an anxious and disappointed man. He had lately been writing down Adams in the *Richmond Enquirer*. He tried to embroil him with the Federalists of his own section; † and his rancor against the administration, which was as deep set as Randolph's, encouraged the dominant party of the State to place Virginia in a menacing attitude towards the general government. As for Randolph, "the image of a great man stamped upon base metal," to use Adams's metaphor, his faithful constituents took him once more on their shoulders and returned him to his old seat in the House of Representatives.

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* See Clay's Private Correspondence, 1825, 1827, which contains the letter, and Clay's own comment upon it.

† Some of Jefferson's best friends regretted that he should have given Giles so much as a simple statement of facts which the latter could pervert to Adams's injury. In Jefferson's published works will be found the letter to Giles in question, written near the close of 1825, as also a letter, January 21, 1826, printed "To———," the address being lost, and defending his motives for writing to Giles. This last-named letter was really in reply to Monroe, who had written January 15, 1826, expressing his regret that Jefferson should have suffered his own name to be connected with Giles's quarrels. See Monroe MSS. The point of Jefferson's statement to Giles was that John Quincy Adams, at the time of the embargo, informed him that there was a dangerous Federal disaffection at the east, and that upon this information Jefferson abandoned the embargo policy. See vol. ii, p. 195.

The 4th of July, 1826, was a memorable day in American annals. It was the fiftieth anniversary of American independence; and while their own names were on all tongues, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson passed away, the former leaving as a last token the immortal phrase, "Independence forever!"* This sublime national coincidence could not be known while the day was celebrated. At Washington special ceremonies were arranged at the Capitol, to which each of these illustrious signers had received invitations, and each excused himself by a letter signed with his own hand. The President and cabinet attended this celebration. On the 6th the President learned of Jefferson's decease; on the 8th that his own father had been rapidly sinking; and on the hot morning of the 9th, as he breakfasted near Baltimore while his horses were resting, came tidings which to him revealed all.† To our people it seemed a miraculous mark of that Divine favor which had constantly attended them. Anthem and eulogy arose in special commemorations where the voice of mourning mingled with a solemn thanksgiving. As Webster fitly said in Faneuil Hall, whose columns and arches appeared for the first time shrouded in black, "The tears which flow and the honors that are paid when the founders of the republic die give hope that the republic itself may be immortal."

1826. July 4.

Jefferson died poor; so poor that a national subscription was started for his relief on the very day his spirit winged its flight. Of the two Ex-Presidents left, both Virginians, Monroe struggled with poverty and domestic losses, and died on the independence day of 1831, almost heart-broken, a touching example of the vicissitudes of public influence

* Adams had sent these words as a toast for the day's celebration at Quincy. His last words were, "Thomas Jefferson survives," or something, imperfectly heard, which sounded like it. Jefferson, however, was at that time dead, having expired about noon, several hours before Adams.

† See John Q. Adams's Diary, 1826.

in a republic whose chief wealth belongs to men in private station who live to serve themselves. While Jefferson could be serene and unperturbed, come what might, Monroe's more sensitive disposition made him shrink from sight while carrying the burden of penury. His theory, moreover, that Presidents should maintain a dignified impartiality in affairs upon ceasing to conduct them, reserving themselves for great occasions, hastened him the more surely to a sort of honorable oblivion: no successor consulted him, no faction of the rising parties hung upon his favor. Jackson, the friend of other days, rode ruthlessly, and at times it seemed even vindictively, over his fame. A memorial to Congress for unsettled dues as minister abroad announced all too modestly his necessities at the time of his retirement, and placed the most successful administrator of his times in the painful attitude of a private claimant before an inattentive Congress.* Profuse hospitality ruined these two citizens of an unprosperous commonwealth; each had served the public better than himself. The more thrifty Madison, with his charming wife, lived in seclusion at Montpelier, a patriot, sage, and historian, dying in 1836, the last of the Virginians, a year later than Marshall; but Madison was not as rich as he seemed.

Thus passed the illustrious men of earlier times. Madison was the latest survivor of the Convention of 1787; and the last signer of the Declaration, whose death preceded his in 1832, was Charles Carroll, the pride, just at this time, of social Baltimore. Carroll was a man of sprightly conversation and manners, so light and brisk in his motions that at eighty-five years he would run down the stairs and out upon the sidewalk and help a lady guest into her carriage like any young gallant.† Of other public men identified with our first epoch, Tompkins died in 1825, King in 1827, each at his home near New York. Gaillard, through

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* See Monroe MSS.; 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs. And see Magazine American History, October, 1884.

† See Quincy's Figures of the Past.

whose long presidency of the Senate occurred, it is said, not a single instance of disorder, died in the course of the present term of Congress; and after much balloting Macon succeeded to an honor which could scarcely confer distinction on any one, while the constant Calhoun served as Vice-President. Two years later Macon retired wholly from public life, against the entreaties of his friends, having in 1828 touched the Psalmist's limit of active life, and resolving, with the conscientious husbandry which 1828. marked his conduct in all things, to round the four-score in an earthly Sabbath. Long experience in both branches and careful attention to business gave him great weight as a legislator. Punctilious, neat, a popular statesman because of his Cato-like independence and integrity, and a stern, though narrow sense of public duty which swerved him invariably to the side of economy or even parsimony in affairs, he it was who opposed all pensions and cast his solitary vote against the gift to Lafayette; and Jefferson has well styled him "the last of the Romans."* Gaillard, a less marked character, was one of those whose wrinkled age seems to forbid a funeral with mourners moved to tears, by the time death puts in the sickle, and his obsequies at the Capitol furnished the melancholy but grotesque spectacle of 1826. a public funeral. Committees of arrangements were to be seen instead of mourners, and a long train of empty hacks, driven by shabby and unconcerned men, who wore broad white bands on their hats, followed the hearse through deep mud and a depressing fog to the Congressional cemetery,† a sequestered spot on the shore of Eastern Branch at the extreme east of the city, with scarcely a building except the jail and almshouse in sight. Here tranquil elegy might have seemed more appropriate had not Congress at some uninspired moment determined to place upon its reserved sites hideous cubes after a uniform pattern, in memory of all members who might die during the term for which

* See 1 Benton's Thirty Years.
† Quincy's Figures of the Past.

they were elected, whether their bones reposed beneath or awaited the last trump hundreds of miles away.

European relations were not at this time in a condition wholly favorable. The death of Alexander of Russia deprived the United States of one who for the most part had been a faithful friend, and excited hopes and fears as to the future state of affairs in Europe. The Bourbon government of France persisted in refusing to treat of our spoliation claims on their independent merits. And as for Great Britain, a new order of Council, issued in 1826, upon flimsy pretexts and before Rufus King's successor on his arrival had opportunity to deliver his letter of credence, shut out summarily all United States vessels from those ports of the West Indies which reciprocity had but lately opened. This rude and sudden rupture of negotiations and the tart explanation which followed were quite characteristic of Canning, who, despite the friendly overtures at the crisis of 1823, remained to the end of his days a complacent Tory, and an unrepentant foe of the United States.*

1826.

In spite of a first rebuff, Adams had cultivated the good will of Gallatin, whose experiment of exchanging Paris for a dull town in western Pennsylvania and imagining himself at home once more was already an admitted failure. Gallatin was the administration's first choice for the Panama mission in 1825, but he declined to serve. In the spring of 1826 the President summoned him to Washington, and it was agreed that he should proceed to London, nominally as King's successor, but really on the footing rather of a special minister, empowered to conduct to a close the difficult negotiations there pending, and then, if he chose, return home.† For Gallatin seriously proposed to settle for the rest of his days on American soil and withdraw from public life.

1826.

* See 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; Rush to Clay, in Clay's Private Correspondence, 1827.

† See Adams's Gallatin.

Our British relations had of late been working into a tangle, their constant tendency in this early age of our national development. Gallatin's task, therefore, was one of great delicacy for a single minister to assume. But his skill and experience could be safely relied upon. The boundary line of our northern frontiers at both extremes, Maine and Oregon, remained in dispute; Alexander's decision in our favor concerning the deported slaves had not yet been carried fully into effect; the convention of 1815, moreover, whose extension for ten years Rush and Gallatin had negotiated in 1818, was now about to expire.

But the most embarrassing subject of all related to trade with the British West Indies, which had produced restriction for restriction and relaxation for relaxation, upon the principle of reciprocity to which the United States adhered. Before the Revolution we had enjoyed that trade as colonial subjects, but as an independent people it was denied to us. We were near these British West Indies; they desired our lumber and food supplies, and we in return their tropical produce. Treaties had failed, but the British government relaxed in favor of the United States during the latter part of Monroe's administration. For in 1822–23 Parliament opened these colonial ports to our commerce, and Congress in return opened the ports of the United States to British vessels. It was a liberal arrangement; and under it this country gained at once a virtual monopoly of the trade. A variety of our articles, such as Indian corn, meal, oats, peas and beans were admitted to the island ports free of duty. But the impression given by such an adjustment of reciprocal benefits was that our country regarded admission to this trade as a right, instead of a privilege, and believed the colonies themselves dependent on American produce. Parliament tried a new experiment. By acts of 1825 the colonial ports were opened to the world on terms far less advantageous to the United States than under the act of 1822. Adams was by this time President. The condition, so far as applied to us, was that British shipping should be placed on the footing of the most favored

nation. But the act, never communicated to our government, never clearly understood,—so complicated had become this whole system of commercial intercourse,—required further explanation; and what with King's fatal illness and the decision reached by our Executive after carefully considering the whole subject and conferring with Congress, to make all needful concessions by treaty instead of statute, the year allowed for acceptance passed; and thus it came that Gallatin, on landing with power to fulfil the condition Parliament had imposed by act of July, 1825, found 1826. August 7. the privileges of that act abruptly withdrawn, and our United States vessels forbidden all intercourse with the British West Indies. What rankled most was Canning's utter refusal to accept explanations or discuss the question farther. Participation in the British colonial trade by other nations was a boon or favor, not properly the subject of negotiation at all; and inasmuch as the United States had not forthwith accepted, purely and simply, the terms offered by the power owning the colony, but undertook to negotiate for other terms, admission to the West Indies, even upon the terms on which they were now opened to other nations, could not be granted them.* What the motive of this peremptory refusal, of this apparent determination to humiliate the United States in the eyes of Europe, Gallatin strained hard to discover; and after allowing for all the points on which perhaps we were vulnerable, our delay, our omission to revoke a restriction when that of Great Britain ceased, our long opposition to her right of laying protective duties, the motives of the ministry were not clear. Canning avowed, however, a purpose to ascertain whether the West Indies could not be made independent of the United States by opening a trade with all the rest of the world and prohibiting it to the United States alone.† Our unreadiness to take a privilege upon England's own terms, our anti-colonizing manifesto, our interest in the Panama Congress, all doubtless confirmed

* See President's annual message of 1826 and documents, Adams's Gallatin.

† Adams's Gallatin.

him in the wish to inflict the sarcastic rebuke. In the face of such an experiment, a last effort on the part of the ministry, perhaps, to save its British colonial system, our government could do nothing but return to the old ground of retaliation. This the President did with as little sign of discomposure as possible, though his disappointment was very keen.

Thrown out of the bearings traced for him upon this most important subject of his mission, Gallatin had to pilot his way very carefully in accommodating differences between the two countries on other points. 1826–27. He could not but see and feel that the temper prevailing at the court of London was quite changed from that of Castlereagh's day, though tory hatred was concealed under an affectation of contempt. Canning, nevertheless, was civil enough personally, intending, doubtless, no rupture, for in his discipline of the United States he always meant to stop short of the *casus belli*. A gross sum was fixed upon for the captured slaves under the umpire's decision, and one long controversy came to an end. In 1827 occurred an unexpected crisis in the English Cabinet. 1827. Lord Liverpool died suddenly in February; and Canning succeeding to Prime Minister, his personal unpopularity gave the King great trouble in sustaining him. The clouds were dispersed by Canning's own death the following August; and Lord Goderich succeeding to that post, Gallatin found that good temper, sense, and sound reasoning had produced in the ministry an impression more favorable to American interests than he had dared expect. Although the interdict upon our West India trade could not be reversed, other subjects of his mission were fairly smoothed out. The commercial convention of 1815 was continued indefinitely; leaving either party free to abrogate it at twelve months' notice. A joint temporary use of the disputed territory west of the Rocky Mountains, as defined in a former convention, was also continued. August–September And as a last friendly expedient, the disputed question of the north-eastern or Maine boundary

was referred by common consent to the King of the Netherlands as umpire between the two nations. These points settled, Gallatin hastened back to the United States; and selecting New York city for the abode of his declining years, he withdrew finally from the diplomatic service to which his illustrious prime had been devoted, and from active American politics; not without first performing some final duties in connection with the boundary settlements, which gave him laborious occupation for the remainder of Adams's term.* Legislator, financier, diplomatist, Gallatin afforded in his versatile public career an excellent type of the intellectual American statesman; but each new path seemed to divert him from the preceding one, and all from that fervent faith in popular institutions which marked his first entrance into public life. In the course of a long and honorable retirement his counsel was often sought by his fellow-citizens; but he had long been a statesman without passionate convictions. The new drift of national parties towards the rude democracy sickened him of politics. He left a stimulating example of success by diligent work, and yet his views of public men and affairs were strongly shaded with misanthropy.

The loss of the direct trade to the British West Indies produced great discontent among our people, and contributed largely to the unpopularity of Adams's administration. A lucrative and convenient commerce came suddenly to an end. There were no means left of an interchange of products but through the intervention of a foreign vessel and a circuitous voyage. We were injured and insulted; and to make our rebuff the greater, while the United States were cut off for not accepting the act of Parliament of 1825 within a year, other powers in the same predicament—France, Spain, and Russia—were allowed to accept after the time had elapsed. We returned to the State of mutual interdiction. "The British government," observed Adams in 1827, "have not only declined

* Adams's Gallatin.

negotiation upon this subject, but by the principle they have assumed with reference to it have precluded even the means of negotiation. It becomes not the self-respect of the United States either to solicit gratuitous favors or to accept as the grant of a favor that for which an ample equivalent is exacted." *

Disposed to shirk its duty in the premises and leave all odium to rest upon the Executive shoulders, without an effort to remove it, Congress had not aided in resenting the new British interdict. This subject was discussed at great length during the second session of the nineteenth Congress; but by a disagreement between the two Houses on an immaterial point, the bill was lost at the last moment. Left to his own discretion, the President, by virtue of a law passed in 1823, issued his proclamation on the 17th of March, declaring the colonial trade prohibited, and reviving against Great Britain in return all the old restrictions of 1818 and the subsequent acts.† 1826-27.

The second session of the nineteenth Congress lasted from December 4, 1826, to March 3, 1827. An indifference to administration measures and an increasing disposition to criticise the theory and views of the Executive marked the proceedings of this body. On the day of final adjournment the President found scarcely half a dozen bills to sign at the Capitol, and these were of little consequence. Appropriations for all the departments had been liberal enough, nor had the Senate rejected his appointments to office; but the only bill which Adams thought creditable to this Congress and of permanent benefit to the country was one which applied $500,000 per annum for six years to the gradual improvement of the navy;‡ and from this the House had stricken a clause providing the Naval Academy he had asked for. Except for the Panama mis-

* President's Message, Dec. 8, 1827. And see public documents; 1 Benton's Thirty Years.

† See 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary; Annals of Congress; Niles's Register; Executive documents.

‡ Act March 3, 1827; 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary.

sion, nothing indeed seemed to have carried weight in the legislature as an administration measure. Bills were framed to meet the President's suggestions, but no one watched them or pushed them through the final stages. A new executive department for interior concerns, further provision for revolutionary survivors, an increase of the judiciary so as to give two new circuits to the growing western States,—these and other important recommendations bore no fruit, the two Houses disagreeing upon details or else turning their attention in other directions. Many important bills went over at last with the unfinished business, and delay made no insignificant part in the tactics employed to baffle the administration and weaken its new canvass before the people. Executive messages had long given the impulse to legislation, so that without an Executive opinion directly pronounced Congress would hardly take up a subject at all; and the storm of criticism which Adams's first message encountered shows the weight which was attached to a President's announcement of his views of policy. The miscarriage of so much that was recommended produced among the supporters of the administration a novel sensation ominous of disaster.

In this nineteenth Congress appeared Edward Everett for the first time as a national statesman and civilian. With his talents and eloquence he made himself felt as one of Adams's ablest supporters in the House. Webster, too, gave to the President a firm support on occasions when he stood most in need of it, though the mission he desired was not bestowed upon him. Of later Presidents, James K. Polk, of Tennessee, a man of North Carolina birth, began with this Congress and in the House a national career, rising but slowly to distinction in debate, as also did James Buchanan, who had been a member from the Lancaster district of Pennsylvania since 1821, and drew the public gaze in 1827, when Jackson named him as his witness to testify to bargain and corruption.* In the Senate,

* Of Buchanan's letter on the issue of "corrupt bargain," Webster wrote that he did not think the statement candid; that Buchanan labored

Van Buren's colleague, chosen to succeed King from New York, was Chancellor Sandford, who had been displaced by Van Buren in 1821, and now came back on the renomination and full assent of Van Buren's supporters, in pledge of the new political harmony prevailing in that State.

Very few members who joined in the attack upon our Executive had failed to keep on terms of social intercourse with the President. A number of men in both Houses would abuse Adams in debate, indulging in personal reflections as unjust as they were annoying, and yet attend drawing-rooms at the White House, and, when invited, the dinners; always ready to introduce their friends to the President, and to recommend candidates for every office which might fall vacant. The most formidable of enemies, as Adams notes in his Diary, were those whose personal deportment towards him was always courteous and respectful, who abstained from all insulting personalities both in public and in private and who yet applied all their faculties to opposing the measures which the administration most desired. "Some of them, under the courtesies of life, conceal a rancor of heart as corrosive as the rabid foam of Randolph." *

Section II.

PERIOD OF TWENTIETH CONGRESS.

March 4, 1827—March 3, 1829.

Now to describe the appearance, character, and personal habits of the great civilian whose present fortune, or one should say, misfortune, it was to occupy the Presidential

very hard to protect General Jackson, so far as he could without injury to himself. Clay correctly observed that Buchanan failed in every essential particular to sustain the General, and turned the tables by showing, instead of intrigues on the part of Clay, that Jackson's own friends were disposed to make a similar disposal of the Secretaryship of State in return for support at the House election. See Clay's Private Correspondence, 1827.

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1827.

chair against the general preference, and as though to correct the rising fancy of the people for military magistrates and men untrained to the burdens of state.

John Quincy Adams, though now at the age of sixty, maintained by temperate habits a full vigor of mind and body. His figure was short and thick, but regular exercise kept it from corpulence. His round, bald head, filled, as the forehead showed, with an active and capacious brain, was set firmly upon square shoulders, conveying at once the impression of honest and fearless dogmatism. His eyes were small, black, and piercing, discerning selfish motives at a glance, however covered up by cunning and hypocrisy, and yet too ready to see the faulty part of men and believe the worst of them, unwilling to indulge harmless flattery or be blinded by good nature; while a troublesome rheum gave sometimes a ludicrous pathos to their severity of expression as though he wept.* Under a fringe of thin gray hair and side-whiskers stood out his firm cheek-bones, large mouth and chin, the whole expression of the face that of self-respect and resolution. To glance at a good portrait of this man is to feel positive that he had his opinion and was prepared to state it. In one picture his hand holds a book, with fingers at the very page and passage wanted; in another his outstretched arm plants a cane, as though to pin his postulate fast to solid earth.†

A family resemblance is traceable between the second and sixth Presidents, and at the same time striking differences, both of character and method of administration. Both the Adamses had dignified aims and a just sense of public duty; both looked upon the Presidency as the highest grade of public honor, to be reached by a long, labori-

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* See the light jest about "tears in his eyes," contained in Clay's letter of January, 1825, referred to *supra*, p. 327, and commented upon in 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary. Clay had to expose this piece of levity in order to produce the strongest proof that he had honestly made up his mind to vote for Adams, and it placed him in a singular dilemma.

† See two different portraits of John Quincy Adams at Corcoran Gallery, Washington, and the Boston Art Museum.

ous, and honorable approach; a prize to be not less deserved than desired. Both were trained civilians and students of political systems, having illustrious claims upon the common gratitude. But with infinite preparation, both proved unsuccessful political leaders, unsuccessful Presidents, and were cast aside on the nearest opportunity, chiefly because of a peculiar temper, such as unfits one for managing or being managed, but leaves him an individual contending in the midst of surrounding circumstances. Strangely unfortunate circumstances were those in which each accepted the burden of exalted station; but such was the strength of personal character in either instance, that the people learned to honor those they had thrown down. Of these two sons of America, John Adams was the more humane and generous, and John Quincy Adams the more scholarly. The former felt the limitations of a British-born colonist, the subject of a king, though time and experience moulded him into a Republican; the latter was a Republican by instinct and conviction. Adams the elder had a noble heart and went by its impulses. He clung to his friends, cherished strong likes and dislikes, quarrelled and made up, loved his family, and, when things went pleasantly, gave his light humor full play. He was a man of foibles, and erratic often, under the influence of vanity or wounded pride. But John Quincy Adams, constant in domestic duties, and a model husband, son, and father, found scarcely a tender tie outside his home circle, and all his humor was sardonic, like that of a misanthrope. Both were irritable and impatient, ill-disposed to advice, sufficient unto themselves; but the elder was irascible, bursting out like a thunder-storm and then yielding to sunshine, while the younger, who better controlled his feelings and kept himself under rigid discipline, did not disclose infirmity of temper so much as a cold, unsympathetic manner, which could make a scornful utterance terribly bitter,—far more so, indeed, oftentimes, than he was aware of. Neither had tact in statesmanship; both despised little arts; but the father, who theorized against democracy, was in his day

loved by the people and thwarted by the politicians, while the son, whose theories were liberal enough, could dispel a rivalry better than the dense weight of unpopularity which forever enveloped him. The elder erred the more often from impulse, the younger from a want of it; and yet reflection, or a returning sense of justice, prompted John Quincy Adams to many a considerate and disinterested act which from the world was hidden. In business method, punctiliousness, the supervision of department business, the first Adams failed; while in these respects the second may be held up as a model President; but hesitation to remove, to maintain a needful discipline, was their common failing in the Executive office. Neither had the faculty of organizing; but each as a leader left political elements to coalesce as they might. To rule through subordinates and keep up a loyal, compact administration was beyond them; and still more, to keep the majority bearing up the whole weight; for each, with all his study of comparative politics, carried something of the doctrinaire into affairs, and though strong in great points was weak in the small ones. Both, in fine, had burning convictions, but the father's convictions were those of youth and practical benevolence; the son's on the other hand, of serious study, a morose disposition, and crabbed old age; these guided to independence and union, those, by making the north courageous, to fratricide and civil war, and yet through all, as we may hope, to a higher conception of liberty and equal rights. As President the two Adamses passed quickly out among the failures of the age, accomplishing little to be long remembered; but as fearless men on the floor of an American Congress, stirring the blood, forcing conviction by example, and compelling willing or unwilling attention, they stand on the canvas the most vivid figures of two remarkable epochs of American history full sixty years apart. John Adams stood among the immortals in youth as John Quincy Adams did in old age.

So far as education and the experience of foreign courts and cabinet can make one a chief magistrate, no one was

ever better qualified for President of the United States than John Quincy Adams. His training for that office began in precocious youth, and under the watchful direction of parents whose pride as well as their love was bound up in him. Nothing that the fame and influence of John Adams could accomplish—and in those days traditions and family influence were very powerful—was omitted, that a favorite son might be set on the high road to public preferment. The son himself responded early and constantly to these efforts; he developed ambition, talent, studiousness, and an indomitable perseverance. His daily life was regulated with the utmost precision; not an hour of the day was wasted. He rose when his chronometer pointed a certain hour, and dressed by the light of his taper; in regimen and exercise he calculated to a nicety what would keep him in physical tone for the labors each day imposed and carry him the full span of a great public career; business, usually of the diplomatic kind, divided his time with books, literary composition, and whatever else might serve for self-culture; bedtime approached, and happy was he if no social hilarity kept him up beyond the regular hour. With so perfect a chart of daily existence formed in early life, and, like civil government itself, capable of amendment or remodelling, as experience and the change of circumstances might suggest, but never to be abandoned, each obligation of life was punctiliously regarded; and among these obligations the social one, which in court circles consists so largely in the interchange of cards, receptions, routs, balls, and the like ceremonious civilities, found its place. But where so much was laid out to be done and so little left to happen, the gentler hospitalities and graces of life were the most likely to suffer. Adams weeded the garden of his morals with the utmost care; his introspection was constant; he took physical exercise but little recreation; he allowed himself no vices, no indulgences. He never gave way to the dissipations of youth, for he had no youth. As part of his machinery of self-improvement he opened a Diary in 1794,—indeed, his earlier efforts in this direction

began when he was only twelve years old,—and kept it almost continuously until within a few years of his death. Out of all this self-discipline and public experience, beginning in early youth, which was confined chiefly to the artificial surroundings of European courts or of our pseudo-court at Washington, developed a character whose unyielding Puritanism, always the strongest element in spite of all that mingling with the world could do, gave it a sombre and unsocial cast. He grew up to be a lover of books and political philosophy more than a lover of his kind. Self-love, self-absorption, was his great defect of character; although he meant to be just by all men, and as a statesman the good of the public was, doubtless, the grand purpose of his career. By the time he became President he had grown close in money matters, close in family affection, and a constant niggard of his hours,—nothing annoyed him more than to be obliged to waste so much precious time in listening to foolish and frivolous people. Then, too, he was stiff and unsusceptible. He enjoyed the seclusion of his home and study, where he might prepare by himself the immortal task; and in that task he cared to consult only Him who prescribed it.

Adams had in his day met more great men than perhaps any other American of his age; yet among men great or small he had hardly an intimate friend; from boyhood he had mingled constantly in society, entertaining and being entertained, yet he could not make a guest feel at ease in his company. Light compliments he rarely exchanged. If he thought a jest, it left his mouth a sarcasm. He was earnest, but had no generous sense of humor. When a common voter came up with his plain but hearty salute, Adams turned him off with an ill-suited response, uttered in so harsh and jarring a tone that it sounded like a malediction. His iciness of manner repelled even where he invited approaches. Circumspect, cautious, distrustful, his habit was to receive but not communicate. In short, his way to distinction was won not by courting popularity but by compelling respect; and at every step he took a foe

would start up. He judged of contemporaries harshly, as his Diary shows; looked at the seamy side of human nature; and suffering great hindrance from his want of tact, he judged bitterly enough of those who thrived by means of it.

But, popular or unpopular, who could better have been leaned upon at this hour than one so eminent in the qualities of a statesman? For to great talents, information, and experience in affairs, Adams united unceasing industry and perseverance, besides facility of execution and a wholesome temperate life. He had a high standard of public and private virtue, and was conscientious in his dealings. Nevertheless, Adams had faults as an Executive fatal to a successful administration. We speak not of his infirmity of temper; for on the occasions which had most tried his patience he well sustained the dignity of his station, and drew up a message so mild upon French spoliations that Clay protested that one might as well have announced those claims as abandoned. Nothing but the outrageous assaults of Congress in the latter part of his term drove him from the good resolution to curb tongue and pen with which he had guardedly set out. But Adams, though a statesman was no politician; and no one can read the lesson of his failure and hold arts of management longer in contempt. He was in the most genuine sense the scholar in politics. So far from organizing the support which was far from sufficient when he entered upon his office, he let what he had fritter away through inattention or an unwillingness to make the effort to attach it. As to a policy, instead of considering how much the times would bear, proposing simply what might be carried, and avoiding needless hostilities, he blocked out grand but impracticable projects, as though his mission lay in convincing posterity; and then, leaving all to Providence, and nothing to his personal influence with the legislature, he carried nothing of consequence, but raised a whirlwind of opposition. Nor did he keep office-holders under discipline while conducting the public business, and make the machinery of his administration work

to one end, but left those who honored and those who were pulling down his administration, as well as the indifferent, all tugging in the same harness. If Clay asked the removal of some virulent office-holder who was working against the administration and weakening it, the President objected by some general maxim; his line was not drawn at faithful service, with neutrality in politics; and even when frauds at the Philadelphia custom-house brought scandal upon his government, he hesitated to make a precedent of displacing the officers there. Various other instances might be cited. There was a curious timidity noticeable here: that of a liberal disposition in politics, some would say; that of conscious guilt that his own place had been corruptly acquired, said others; but history should pronounce it a constitutional weakness. For firmness and sound discretion in exercising the removal power and maintaining the morals of the service may be found in a governor, a general, a corporate manager, or even a mayor, sooner than in the best-read scholar or diplomatist who has passed his prime without ever having been really responsible for subordinates. He admitted that an officer should be honest and competent, and, on the whole, not disloyal to his chief; but he put upon himself such a burden of proof before he would remove or ask a resignation that discipline was really impracticable, nor did he seem unhappy that it should be so.

How incongruous a cabinet Adams meant at first to form these pages have shown, as also his prime error in selecting a Secretary of State.* His ideal was a high one: he meant to administer, not to manage; to administer for the people, not for a party; to carry out his plans by a policy which the people themselves would spontaneously sustain. Of his ability to conquer by this ideal he felt at the outset confident, over-confident. He originated ideas, was set and stubborn in his own views, as well as fearless, and hence yielded to advice rather than changed his con-

* *Supra*, p. 343.

victions. A sublimated strain ran through his official utterances, and the earlier ones most of all. But his standard was too rigid, too elevated, while at the same time he clung pertinaciously to his own maxims and methods. This his cabinet advisers soon saw. The course they took was a curious and yet a needful one. They obtained permission to scrutinize the draft of his annual message by themselves and minute the passages they objected to before discussing them with him, thus enabling themselves to concentrate criticism and impress their objections. It was a mark of his just disposition that he yielded to their wishes on this point, at the same time almost reproaching himself for doing so. Their nervousness was lessened when he announced that general recommendations should be confined to his first and last messages. The fear of alienating Virginia had not induced him to tone down his expressions in favor of national improvements and a university, as though the existing constitution sanctioned them; and when asked to say something soothing to South Carolina he bluntly refused, because South Carolina had placed an unconstitutional law upon her statute book relating to the blacks, and would not repeal it. In his anxiety to be upright Adams would make himself needlessly severe. But the effect of his watchful, even morbid, self-discipline was felt by those in his constant confidence, and his wish to do right kept their intercourse smooth. "I had fears of Mr. Adams's temper and disposition," wrote Clay in 1828, "but I must say that they have not been realized; and I have found in him, since I have been associated with him in the Executive government, as little to censure or condemn as I could have expected in any man." *

No President ever refused so ungraciously to stretch a point, however slight, for the sake of doing a personal favor to anybody; at the same time, no President, considering his surrounding circumstances, ever stood so much in need of doing little acts to make himself popular. He

* Clay's Private Correspondence, February, 1828

would not attend the Maryland cattle show when invited, and set a precedent for being claimed as part of such exhibitions; nor in declining could he conceal his honest reasons; for to such a mind official conduct resolved itself into a series of propositions, and everything was to be decided upon mental argument. The decision was usually in favor of non-action. When asked to exert his influence in the choice of a Senator from one of the States he was angry, as he might well have been. He would not give money to aid a political canvass, nor put his name upon a subscription paper. When the head of a military school marched his pupils to the White House he would not make them a speech, because he suspected the visit was a piece of quackery to get the seminary puffed into notice in the public prints. He refused to answer a campaign slander, even when constituents asked his explanation; but we should observe that the easy expedient of interviewing had not thus early been adopted by the press. Neither his taste nor principles permitted him to electioneer by showing himself to the people; but here he yielded something to pressure, for he passed through Philadelphia and Baltimore, the canvass being a very critical one for the party, and really enjoyed the crowds and handshaking. He would not meet the foes of the administration on their own ground, nor try to bring presses to his support. "I have observed," he says, "the tendency of our electioneering to venality, and shall not encourage it."* All this honest obstinacy and rigid adherence to rule might have made some Presidents vastly popular; nor is it likely that with more suavity of manner and a more accommodating temper Adams could have turned the tide which set so strongly against him. He had at the start voluntarily taken odds too great for any President who owed something to himself and his party; and this, after all, was the prime source of his unpopularity.

At the opening of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal,

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1825-27.

our President discovered with pleasure how a characteristic act which strikes the fancy suddenly may touch the deepest chord of the occasion. He took the spade to break the ground; but his strokes made no impression, because the large stump of a tree was beneath the surface. He then threw off his coat, applied the spade once more, and brought up his shovelful of earth. The loud shout which burst forth from the spectators showed that they were roused by this incident more than by all the rhetoric of the day. For once an electric sympathy between himself and his audience was established, and he enjoyed the sensation; but it was a life-long maxim with him not to be sensitive to transient popular symptoms, but to let them bubble and work off, and look rather to ultimate than the immediate effects of public opinion.*

John Quincy Adams well describes his own habits and daily routine while holding the Presidential station. At first he thought his present mode of life more regular than at any former period. He rose in the winter season between five and six; walked by the light of the moon or stars, or in the dusky dawn, about four miles, usually returning home in time to see the sun rise from the eastern chamber of the White House. Then he would make his fire, read the Bible, with the aid of Commentaries, and dispatch his papers. He breakfasted at nine; and from ten till five in the afternoon received visitors, and such a succession of them as left him little time for business which needed close attention. From five to half-past six he dined; after which, unless interrupted by visitors, he gave four hours to solitary reading and writing in his chamber, and between eleven and twelve retired to bed. This was the daily routine of a man nearly threescore years old. In summer, varying these hours somewhat, he used to bathe in the Potomac, being an excellent swimmer; but once while trying to swim across the river he came near drown-

* See 7, 8 J. Q. Adams's Diary.

ing, and cramps and debility admonished him, moreover, to depend at his time of life upon less dangerous exercise. His customary morning walk was to Capitol Hill and back, over Pennsylvania Avenue, four and a half miles in all, including Capitol Square, round which he found he could race and return home so as to perform the whole journey in sixty minutes by the clock. Usually his travel at this early hour was solitary, but when belated he would sometimes meet Clay or some Senator going to the central market, and have a companion for part of the distance. The botany of the garden attached to the Executive mansion interested him greatly; and for the last two years of his term he depended much for exercise upon horseback riding. Conforming gladly to the usage which excused a President from going into company, he had hoped for much seclusion; but the absorption of his time by the ceaseless round of politicans, office-seekers, and sight-seers soon tried his patience severely. That indispensable penalty of supremacy in this vast republic was to him a burden which grew heavier from day to day, and the more so as his consciousness of ill-success increased. "I can scarcely conceive," he wrote in 1827, "a more harassing, wearying, teasing condition of existence. It literally renders life burdensome." *

In religious devotions the President was a true type of the New Englander of those times. Unitarian by profession, yet not fully satisfied to be called Unitarian or Trinitarian, he joined the church soon after his father's death. But in Washington he went often to the Presbyterian church, and contributed handsomely to its building fund. Attending public worship somewhere each Sunday, he enjoyed hearing sermons and dissecting them. His pen ran naturally to devout phrases and Scriptural expressions; and to Divine Providence he committed his daily experience. He paraphrased the Psalms, as well as Greek and Latin poetry, besides turning out sonnets and other fugitive

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs.

pieces of original verse. Indeed, the bent of his mind was always strong to literary pursuits, though with much tendency to imitate. Distrust of his own fitness for the jurist's life, with its constant *ita lex scripta est*, and a statesman because his country had called him into the service of the people, it was one of his pet fancies that had he chosen his own path in life, some great work, some protracted task of the pen, would have filled the meed of his ambition and earned the gratitude of his fellow-men. Scarcely one great man can be said to have mistaken his vocation, though many in their moments of discontent will imagine that they have done so; and who can conceive of either Adams as performing his life's work fitly without bringing the great force of his individual presence and example to bear upon passing events? A biographical oration, usually prepared in haste, diverted our President in the literary direction, or rather preserved the ripe fruits of his statesmanship; but though a teacher of rhetoric, and the founder of a practical school of popular oratory just coming into fashion, he had not the essential graces of an orator. Of all the versatile and voluminous writings he left behind him,— enough, it is said, to rival the hundred volumes of Voltaire, and yet containing various repetitions of thought,— nothing will live like his Diary; for it is a political history of his times, accurate in facts, dispelling many illusions, revealing inner motives, and at the same time a statesman's autobiography. It presents one of our greatest American characters in that interesting dramatic light so rarely afforded on the human stage, namely, of constant soliloquy.

The routine of the national capital, official and social, kept on during Adams's term as under his predecessor. Whatever disposition might appear to multiply offices and increase the patronage of the government, Congress kept it sufficiently in check. Winter brought its usual round of balls, parties, and levees, from which strangers were excluded unless they brought letters of introduction. The crowd at the first New Year's reception overflowed into

the great east room of the White House, which appeared so naked and uncared for that Congress was shamed into appropriating for finishing and furnishing it.* All such sums the President chose to disburse personally, and one of his sons served him as private secretary.

1825–1827. The first two years of this administration were decisive of its destiny. Its policy was defined in the first annual message: namely, to spend liberally upon the construction of roads and canals, and to patronize the cause of science and national education; all of which involved a liberal construction of the powers conferred upon the general government. There was nothing more except to carry on well the business of practical administration; for the Panama mission ended in disappointment; and to protection for manufactures beyond what the existing tariff might afford, Adams, out of regard for southern feeling, avoided committing himself. Both the British and Georgia troubles were chance obstacles, encountered like snags in a current; and through these the administration piloted as judiciously as it could. Between liberal and strict construction, then, the party lines were drawn; and the State projectors, they who had some new enterprise on foot to push which needed a generous subscription, were attracted hither; educators also and those who inclined to exploration; in a word, men of learning, position, and property as against the multitude. Conservatism, too, was hither attracted, for changes were few, the finances worked smoothly, and the community reached a high grade of material prosperity. Into such a party they of Federal antecedents must naturally have been absorbed. But inability to carry out its most cherished plans was a great hindrance to this administration, while Adams's peculiar temperament, and his misfortunes in some points of foreign policy, hindered in other ways the concourse of elements. The projector found that it was not his turnpike or canal

* See 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary; Act May 22, 1826.

the Executive pushed, but an abstract one; the patronage-seekers, that there was no patronage.

Notwithstanding all these tendencies, the national contest was still in the main one of personal preferences; in fact, as events progressed, between the Jackson and anti-Jackson party. Adams, in accordance with time-honored usage, was to be supported by the friends of his administration for a second term. And the friends of Andrew Jackson, on the other hand, had resolved from the moment the result of the House election was announced, to make him a candidate again for 1828. Tennessee welcomed him home in the summer of 1825 as though he had conquered already; and in October the legislature of that State re-nominated him for President, almost by acclamation, receiving him with appropriate ceremonies at Nashville a day or two after. Jackson accepted this renewed token of distinction at its hands, resigning in return his seat in the United States Senate. Placed thus early before the people as a private citizen who was willing once more to receive their suffrages for chief magistrate, Jackson vigorously addressed himself, with his friends, to the new campaign. Two prime objects were kept in view; to make Adams's administration as obnoxious as possible, and to unite all the elements of the opposition, including Crawford's late support, in Jackson's favor. Nothing served the former purpose like the cry of a conspiracy, and a corrupt one, to thwart the people's will; and this cry was kept up incessantly. "Bargain and corruption," the charge which the rustic Kremer had been the first to make and run away from, was proclaimed from every Jackson stump and disseminated through all the Jackson presses. It was not necessary to prove. The poison of insinuation worked rapidly enough; for in politics calumny is easily credited, and reiteration forces conviction. Jackson himself believed, and in the Spring of 1827 assumed responsibility for the accusation; the proof he adduced failed him, but the charge he never retracted.*

1825. Oct.

* See 3 Parton's Jackson.

For making the combinations in his favor of the elements opposed to Adams and Clay, Jackson had excellent lieutenants to labor in his interests. Calhoun carried the work as far as his own influence would permit; but Crawford was his inveterate foe. A new manager appeared on the scene in Van Buren, master-spirit that he was in political craft, imperturbable, adroit, and at the same time assiduous to avoid all personal collision. How or when he came over from Crawford, for whom he had worked so zealously in 1824, is not clearly shown, but doubtless his quick perception told him that when Crawford failed in 1825 he had failed forever. To reconcile Crawford's friends to Jackson was a delicate and difficult affair, but it was agreed that Crawford himself could not be run again, and this made the task much easier. Since his paralysis Crawford's memory and judgment had suffered, and he was not so easy of address as before, but he showed a nervous irritability and an obstinate eagerness. His friends had found him a soft place upon the circuit bench of Georgia. Of this State Forsyth was now chosen governor. To Lewis at Tennessee and Senator Eaton in Washington, both trustworthy and eager friends, Jackson gave the apparent conduct of his cause, holding himself aloof as a plain, honest citizen, who waited for the unbiassed verdict of an intelligent people. As Eaton and Van Buren sat constantly in the Senate together a channel of communication of course was open. Reticent hitherto as to his future course, and enjoining most rigidly upon his followers at home not to commit themselves on the Presidential question, Van Buren had kept the Democratic party in New York State under the most perfect condition of discipline, while his own re-election to the Senate was pending. Early in 1827 he was re-elected without any regular opposition for six years from the following March. This left him more free to express himself. Upon the adjournment of the nineteenth Congress, Van Buren, in company with Cambreling, a member of the House from New York, but of North Carolina birth, made a tour through Virginia, the

1827.

1827. March.

Carolinas, and Georgia. This was commonly understood to be an electioneering trip on Jackson's behalf, and upon their return it was publicly stated that the combinations for electing Jackson were about completed. From this time greater concert was manifested in the party movement of the opposition; and the Crawford wing, which had remained noncommittal ever since Adams's election, came over bodily to Jackson's support.*

To offset these manœuvres, the natural and almost the only leader of the administration capable of giving an active political direction was Clay. He and Jackson figured constantly as rivals before the public gaze. Bells and cannon had saluted Jackson on his return to Nashvile; Clay's welcome at Lexington was made quite as imposing an ovation. Through the press Jackson defended himself from Clay's aspersion of a "military chieftain," and denying that he, on his part, had ever attempted in any way to turn the decision of the House in 1825, declared that he would see the earth open and swallow both Clay and his friends, and himself with them, before he would stoop to bargain for the Presidency. Clay's address to his constituents in 1825 was a strong effort to justify his course in accepting a place in the cabinet; and constantly on the defensive, he discussed that issue in the public prints with Eaton and Ingham, and after Jackson's letter came out, with Jackson himself. But Clay grew dispirited, weary, as time went on. While Jackson's forces were constantly recruited, and the whole mass adhered closely, the friends of the administration had no concert, no energy. Treacherous men, entrenched in the offices, were trading with the enemy, and the President would neither remove nor recall them to duty. The complaint was universal that the administration did not support its friends. Southard's firm hand ruled the little State of New Jersey; but to overcome the rebellious spirit of States

1825.

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary; Hammond; Parton's Jackson; Niles's Register.

like Pennsylvania and Virginia, Rush and Barbour, of the cabinet, were equally powerless. No one was despondent over the situation sooner than Adams himself after the first transport of confidence had passed. He could not be deceived by the flattering hopes of others. "My only course," he wrote in 1826, morbidly depressed by the sense of political failure, "is to prepare for retirement, as I hope I am now doing." *

Jackson's alliance with the friends of Crawford and Calhoun once cemented, it seemed almost certain that the electoral vote of the south would be cast in his favor. New England, on the other hand, showed a disposition to sustain Adams, as a northern President and a distinguished son. The seat of war, then, was to be the middle belt of States, stretching from New York westward. Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri had preferred Clay to other candidates in 1824, but now they wavered. The lesser middle States were all worth battling for; but upon the decision of Pennsylvania and New York, the two States of the Union casting the largest electoral votes, hung, after all, the essential fate of the contest. To the administration Pennsylvania might well appear to be already lost; for here the Democracy had long clamored furiously for the people's President, and Jackson had only to hold the ground he gained in 1824. Here Shulze continued governor, being re-elected in the fall of 1826 without much opposition, and though Philadelphia swayed a little, so that partisans might boast that the sentiment of the State was turning, like that of New Jersey, the President himself saw no evidence that the attachment of the people to Andrew Jackson was declining. All looked to New York, whose late electoral vote had slipped so suddenly from Van Buren's mortified grasp at the last moment.† By that mischance Van Buren had profited in season to play more judiciously; and doubt-

1826–27.

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary, Sept. 1826.

† *Supra*, p. 314.

less a sense of insecurity drew into readier accord the leaders of the State Democracy at the same time that they pacified the friends of Adams by keeping the Presidential question in the shade as long as possible. Their sole object, as they averred for two years or more after Adams's election, was to preserve the entire union of the party until its own preference should be declared at the proper time, and then in good faith endeavor to carry into effect the general wish. So cunningly, so perseveringly, was this plan pursued, the party newspapers assenting to it, that the fall election of 1826 revealed the spectacle of a State Democracy admirably marshalled under the cold, concealed, but consummate mastery of the Albany Regency. Rochester, the late secretary of the Panama mission, was set up apparently as an administration candidate. Clinton was re-chosen governor, but by a majority which had in two years dwindled from 16,000 to little more than 3000; both houses of the legislature were in the hands of the Van Buren interest; and so far from gaining the indorsement for the next Presidency from his own State, which it had been his fond desire to procure, Clinton, to the consternation of himself and his friends, found himself at the mercy of his dreaded rival, utterly uncertain where he would next be landed. His first impulse was to make overtures through a confidential friend, with a view of connecting his political fortunes henceforth with Adams, should the latter treat him as his natural successor. But Adams, who knew what a chameleon Clinton was in political friendship, and saw in the offer something of a threat, left him to judge for himself where his real interest lay; and Clinton, to judge by his acts, concluded to use his respite of two years in cultivating Jackson as before. His rival's tactics still invited a full concert; and both Clinton and Van Buren uniting their forces the following November, New York State was swept by the Democracy with scarce the sign of resistance on behalf of the Adams administration. By this time the national preference of the party was pronounced; and that preference

1826. November.

1827. November.

was for Andrew Jackson. The self-constraint and reticence of the Regency up to this time produced its full effect upon the people. The signal was given; the newspapers of the party announced the candidate together; and the voice of this great State was like the sudden rush of mighty waters.*

State affairs had for the last few years moved on prosperously for the most part. The unsettled northeast boundary made Maine impatient, for her inhabitants dreaded a surrender of disputed territory to the British flag. Of Georgia's arrogance with the Indians and the passionate appeal to first principles in Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia we have spoken. Elsewhere the scene was tranquil. In Massachusetts, since the death of Eustis and Brooks, all parties had yearly united to choose Levi Lincoln, a moderate Democrat, to the office of governor. Wolcott of Connecticut was now growing too old for the cares of office; he declined further honors, and Tomlinson, a member of Congress, quietly succeeded him in 1827. In Pennsylvania the question of calling a convention to amend the constitution of the State was submitted to the people in 1825, and the vote was adverse to holding it. Ohio and the west ripened in the sunshine. Kentucky's long balanced parties ceased their strife over the local courts, old and new, and made the national canvass their main concern. Money was becoming abundant through the north, and the enterprises on foot kept private capital well employed. But the necromancy of party had maintained its spell since 1825. Great interest was taken in the Congressional elections of '26 and '27. Jackson and Adams meetings were kept up in all the doubtful States. There were committees of correspondence, delegates, and addresses, all this machinery operating eighteen months or more before the Presidential election to stir up the passions of the people in favor of the administration or against

* See 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; Hammond's Political History; 2 Parton; Niles's Register.

it. "Adams candidates" or "Jackson candidates" were heard of, but the old party names were seldom applied. In all this the Jackson party had the advantage of concert and confidence. Their leaders kept the administration constantly on the defensive, making bold charges and persevering in them; they claimed every doubtful State or person as theirs; they assumed the victory as already won.

Clay was still sanguine of results, though he saw his followers dispirited and his own State slipping from his control. What the people needed, he thought, was a more complete refutation of the "bargain and corruption" slander. Another long pamphlet of defence on his part, with letters to show the precise date in 1825 when he had declared that he intended to vote for Adams, and this, accompanied by vouchers of confidence from respectable sources and a keen analysis of the meagre testimony brought against him, would turn the current. By a well-prepared brief he hoped to win his case at the bar of public reason.* But the President could not deceive himself by any such false hopes. Less disposed to look upon the bright side, he now felt that prejudice and passion would carry the day; he saw no omens in the air but those of certain defeat. His message for the first session of the twentieth Congress was drafted under such agony of mind that, as he noted, he was ashamed of it, and almost afraid to read it over to his cabinet.† 1827.

The storm and fury expected at the assembling of this new Congress descended, indeed, with full force. The Jackson men, encouraged by the returns of the late elections, had brought out their forces at the capital in good season. All but six members of the House were present on the first day of the session, and a single ballot settled the complexion of this new body. Andrew Stevenson of Virginia, a man of easy manners 1827. Dec. 3.

* See *supra*, p. 342.

† 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; Clay's Private Correspondence.

but rigid in his opposition, was elected Speaker by 104 votes out of 205, John W. Taylor receiving 94, Philip P. Barbour 4, and 3 votes scattering. In the Senate, Vice-President Calhoun took the chair, and the roll-call was answered by all but two,—Webster, who had lately been chosen to this branch by the Massachusetts Legislature, and Thomas of Illinois. The President's message was sent in to both Houses. The House committees, as arranged by the Speaker after much conference and delay, gave the Jackson party, or opposition, four to three, with Randolph, McDuffie, Cambreling, Ingham, and Barbour filling important places. Everett was placed first on the Foreign Relations; but this was not so much to please the President as to mortify Sergeant, who, according to usages, should have held that honor. Taylor, too, was spited. The Senate, under a change of rules, chose its own committees, and these were quite as hostile to the administration as those Calhoun had made up while the discretion vested in him. In a word, both Houses of Congress were organized in full opposition to the administration. Such a state of things had never before occurred since the constitution was adopted.

Dec. 4.

The message and the Executive projects went unheeded, as of course, and this long session of the twentieth Congress was mainly taken up in efforts to defame the administration before the public in preparation for the coming canvass. The House in particular made grand inquest into the conduct of the Executive, scrutinized the public accounts, and passed constant resolutions of inquiry, framed so as to impute a wrong. Members of the opposition vied with one another in proposing new plans for retrenchment and the punishment of defaulters. Calls, vexatious and harassing, were made incessantly upon the Treasury and War Departments by both branches, often in substance involving the same subject and imposing a double labor upon the Secretaries.

1827. Dec. 3. 1828. May 26.

The friends of the administration fell into this line of

warfare. Resolutions were offered on both sides for political effect, and with a view of bringing into controversy the merits and demerits of the candidates. Hamilton of South Carolina proposed, on the 8th of January, that a picture of the battle of New Orleans should be painted by Allston, to fill one of the vacant panels in the rotunda. After much discussion the resolution was rejected by 103 to 98. Sloane of Ohio, an Adams man, retorted by offering a resolution of inquiry into the proceedings of a court-martial held on the 5th of December, 1814, for the trial of certain Tennessee militiamen. These men, six in number, were tried for insubordination and mutiny, and, having been found guilty, were condemned to be shot, which sentence Jackson ordered to be carried into execution. It was claimed that they were executed for crimes committed after their term expired; but the question involved was a technical one. On the 11th of February the committee on military affairs made a long report, which exculpated Jackson and justified the execution. This report, by a vote of 103 to 98, was ordered to be printed with the documents.* Sloane's temerity in this instance cost him a re-election, and he never sat in Congress again.

1828. January. February.

A long and exciting debate arose in the House upon resolutions offered by Chilton, a new member from Kentucky, which proposed an inquiry into the expenditures of government with a view to retrenchment. The ambition of inexperience appears to have prompted the mover of these resolutions to bring them forward on his sole responsibility. They disconcerted the leaders of his party by pointing the charge of wasteful extravagance against not only the Executive, but both Houses of Congress, and past administrations as well as the present. Randolph, McDuffie, and Ingham, leaders of the opposition, struggled by amendments to limit the discussion so as to make it bear exclusively upon Adams and his subordinates,

Jan. Feb.

* Annals of Congress; Niles's Register.

and this led to recrimination from the friends of the administration. At length the House adopted by way of amendment to Chilton's resolutions others offered by Hamilton, for the appointment of a select committee to inquire and report in detail on expenses and retrenchment. The Speaker appointed the committee, placing Hamilton at the head, but omitting Chilton altogether. This committee, after a long and minute investigation, reported near the close of the session, while the minority, through Sergeant, made a counter report. Six thousand copies of these documents were ordered to be printed for distribution by the members among their constituents, so as to bring the issue directly before the public. On one side the increased expenditure of the government was relied upon to prove the extravagance of the administration, while on the other this increase was claimed to be a necessary result of our national growth, and of the policy deliberately adopted by the nation. In such an issue the party which promises retrenchment has the obvious advantage with the public, and they who claim that improvement is not possible suffer for their self-satisfaction.

Feb. 5.

May 15.

As for the multitude of mean and petty items of expenditure, going back to Adams's old and long-settled accounts and contingent items, which made the staple of criticism in the majority report, and those of the stump, the dram-shop and libellous presses, already fifty times refuted, which, to use Adams's own phrase, "the skunks of party slander" squirted about the floor of the House * this winter, they deserve nothing from history but profound contempt; they served the purpose of a scurrilous campaign and that was the end of them. At the very moment the President was denounced as a monster of corruption, greed, and favoritism, he found both Houses of Congress confiding to his discretion works for the improvement of rivers and harbors which involved the outlay of many hundred thousand dol-

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs.

lars.* Nor did the Senate often refuse to confirm his appointments to office; and certainly his forbearance to cleanse the civil list of spies and runners for the Jackson leaders called for some such generosity in return. The treaties with European nations were also ratified, and in general the Senate showed the Executive more courtesy than the House.

One measure of this session, and only one, is of memorial importance: that, namely, which made a new revision of the import duties. This is the tariff act of 1828, pressed through Congress on the eve of the Presidential election, the act which gave birth to nullification and tempted South Carolina to rebel for the first time against the general government. By this statute the sliding scale so carefully adjusted by the act of 1824† was advanced from 33⅓ to an average of 40 and 45 per cent. within a year on woollen goods imported, and other American industries were favored in proportion.‡ As discussed in and out of Congress, this bill was known as "The woollen bill," and our woollen manufacturers, young and ambitious, chiefly promoted its passage. But other interests were drawn in to gain votes and help the bill through Congress; the iron and steel of Pennsylvania, the lead and hemp of the west, the molasses of Louisiana, all were encouraged as against the foreign importer of such articles. Thus fortified, the bill was favorably reported from the committees, and won the majority in both branches of a Congress ruled in Senate and House by the Jackson or opposition party. It became a law by the President's approval shortly before the adjournment, notwithstanding the fiery and furious remonstrance of three southern States. To give American industry the home market for the articles specified was the avowed design of this measure; and protection, no longer an incident, since the na-

* See various Acts, May 23, 1828.
† *Supra*, p. 297.
‡ Act May 19, 1828.

tional revenue was already more than ample for the current needs of the Union, became plainly and palpably a national policy.

This was not in strictness an administration measure; had it been, and were the glory to redound at the polls to the Adams party, it must have failed in a legislature of the present complexion. Adams, it is true, subscribed the bill instead of defeating it by his veto; but as we have already hinted, he had avoided the subject in all of his messages, much to the disappointment of eastern friends, his reason being that the south objected so strongly to increasing the tariff. Jackson, like himself, had been earlier committed to the policy of protection, but he, too, inclined now to silence on the subject.*

Any bill which passed the House at this session by a vote of 109 to 91, and the Senate by 26 to 21, must have drawn largely from the Jackson party; and so, indeed, Rowan and others who disapproved the bill confessed in debate. The tempting array of local items which had drawn one's constituents seduced the vote of men who thought the general principle of the bill a vicious one. A representative man does not vote consistently with principle. But the Adams party approached more nearly than the Jackson Democracy to alliance with the protectionists from a natural instinct; for the States, the sections, the districts most interested in manufactures, the woollen industry in particular, were those whence the administration derived its chief support. Rush had advised a tariff revision in his Treasury report, and, as all knew, the "American system," of which Clay was the father and constant friend, linked together the ideas of national protection and national improvement.

1828. Feb.–April.

This "woollen bill" was, in truth, first brought forward at the second session of the nineteenth Congress. In Feb-

* In response to inquiries, Jackson, about February, 1828, declared his adherence to the principles of the "Coleman letter" (*supra*, p. 312), but was disinclined to state his views again at length.

ruary, 1827, it passed the House, but was killed in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice-President.* That earlier bill was framed chiefly in the interest of wool-growers. Protectionists combined, therefore, in the summer to bring the subject before the twentieth Congress under such auspices as would make their next onset a victory. At the call of the Pennsylvania society, a national convention of the friends of domestic industries assembled at Harrisburg. Delegates attended from New England, the Middle States, Ohio, and even Virginia, but none from the south or the far west. Here a memorial to Congress was carefully prepared, besides an address presenting the cause of protection to the people. It was agreed to seek an increased duty not only on woollens, but on various other specified articles of manufacture. Free-traders, on the other hand, particularly in some seaport towns and in the southern States, where planters held earnest meetings, denounced the whole proposal for altering the tariff. In South Carolina protection as a national policy was boldly declared unconstitutional, and protectionists were stigmatized as men who wished to sink the cotton-growing States. This bill of 1828, reported in the House from the committee on manufactures, after some four weeks spent in taking testimony, was purposely made odious and oppressive in some particulars; for the majority of this committee, unlike its chairman, Mallary of Vermont, were disposed to break down the administration by the measure. Amendments were made, however, and on the whole, the friends of protection considered that the good qualities of the bill more than counterbalanced the objectionable ones. Among prominent Jackson men who voted finally for the bill were Buchanan and Ingham of the House, and Van Buren, Eaton, Rowan, and Benton in the Senate. But Hayne as a South Carolinian, entered his solemn protest against it as a partial, unjust, and unconstitutional measure. When the news of its passage reached New York,

1827.

July 30.

* 31, 32 Niles's Register; Annals of Congress.

some of the vessels in the harbor hoisted their flags at half-mast, and several southern newspapers threatened to resist the law.*

No tariff act can be relied upon as a precedent regardless of the peculiar industrial conditions under which it passed into a law; and these industrial conditions of a nation are constantly changing. At the present epoch, American trade felt keenly the arbitrary restraints and sudden variations of British policy. That policy was still exerted in favor of close trade; and as the latest affront, British Orders in Council shut the West Indies to our commerce. Farmers and manufacturers, by far the most prosperous part of the American community, were jealously excluded from the British market, while of British goods $24,000,000 in value were annually sent over to be consumed in the United States. All this invited the co-operation of grain-producing and manufacturing districts in the United States for their mutual interests. The American woollen industry was feeble and depressed, the wool-growers and the new mills which had lately put capital into a cheap quality of woollens, alike needed encouragement and room for development; hence the theory impressed with much force upon the farmer, that with his own surplus products almost entirely cut off from exportation, he must look to a home market created by home manufactures. East, middle, and west, the richest and most populous quarters of the Union, tended consequently to an alliance which alarmed the sensitive south. That section had its peculiar interests, and the imperious planter his own theories of political economy, and beyond those interests and theories one cared not to look. Southern cotton, rice, and tobacco, unlike the northern farm and dairy products, found a large European market. The cotton export alone was valued at more than $25,000,000 a year; and it was supposed that nearly two-thirds of our annual imports from Great Britain were paid for by that alone. It was assumed by southern

* 34 Niles's Register; newspapers of the day.

economists, therefore, as a leading principle, that the wealth of a nation is not increased by increasing the price of any of its productions not exported; the effect being merely to transfer from the pockets of one portion of the community to another. By the favorite home market, then, the south, the poorest section, would be impoverished in order that the prosperous north might grow richer. A high tariff, it was argued, would aggravate the popular tax, already burdensome, on common articles of consumption; the citizen would not be free to purchase as he chose; and, finally, by offending Great Britain and Europe, we should invite retaliation and limit the foreign market for southern staples. This argument the protectionists answered at length, denying the main theory on which it was founded. Cotton, they added, was no sickly exotic, subject to foreign restrictions, but would still find its proper market. But high as cotton stood on the list of exports, it sank into insignificance as compared with the farming and manufacturing interests. Of the sum total yearly expended at present in the United States on British imported goods, less than one-fifth came from the planting States; and must that section of the Union which comprises the largest area and population, whose productions are rigidly excluded from the British market, consume the other four-fifths, paying to British manufacturers an annual tribute of some $19,500,000 in silence, and denying to themselves the opportunity of development, for the sake of encouraging Great Britain to purchase southern staples ? *

Thus did the question of a protective tariff take, of necessity, a sectional turn. The planting States, themselves ambitious of extending the home market for their own staples cultivated by slave labor, felt the interest and ideas of the north in various ways opposed to theirs. Except for Louisiana, with her sugar-planting industry, these

* The arguments on both sides of the present controversy will be found well stated at length in the report of the House committee of ways and means, 1828, and the reply of the Pennsylvania Society. See 34 Niles's Reg., 164, and public documents.

States now arrayed themselves together upon the policy of free trade. They cared not so much to convert the north; but what they insisted upon was to be "let alone." Manufactures, modern material progress, did not much interest them: protection as now put forward meant, they believed, the hanging of a sword above their section; while with unrestricted commerce for their States to Europe, and Europe a constant customer for their products, they believed they could live independently of the rest of the Union, independently of the world. They believed that Great Britain stood ready to form an alliance with them. Under this vaunted American system was not the south sacrificed to the mammon of the north? There wealth prodigiously accumulated; here it declined. There increasing numbers gave increased influence in the national councils; here all was stagnant and decaying. Northern towns were developing into great cities; while Charleston, the chief port of the south, was of far less consequence than before the Revolution. Protective tariffs must have caused this relative difference, they thought; when, in truth, the act of 1824 was the first act which deserved that name, and the real cause lay far deeper. Thus mused the haughty South Carolinian, and the fire burned; and squat at his side like a toad sat an evil spirit, whispering in his ear that he was better out of the Union than in it, and that disunion might be peaceably accomplished whenever he chose solemnly to pronounce the word.

A singular change of opinion, we should observe, had come over New England. That section, whose commerce formerly disposed it to systems of free trade, unfettered by national rules, was now fairly turned in the opposite direction, and Webster, who had been the most impressive champion of free trade in the discussions of 1824, entered the Senate an equally bold advocate of protection. He explained his change of views ingeniously, like one whose constituents are his professional clients. New England, he said, had held back from the protective policy up to 1824, believing it better that manufactures should be built

up slowly, and without the precarious aid of government patronage. But after the act of 1824, which had been passed without her sanction, nothing remained but to conform herself to the will of others, and give her capital and the skill, economy, and enterprise of her people the full opportunity thus held out. She considered that the government had determined its own policy, and that policy was protection, and to that policy she loyally conformed.* All the more bitterly did the south regard this act of 1828, in consequence of New England's defection; for now was she left alone, as a section, to contend for her ideas against the preponderating weight of the great majority of States and population.

Through all this angry turmoil over the tariff Calhoun presented a calm exterior, like one who would pacify the sectional strife; though the casting vote he gave against the woollen bill in 1827 showed that he had by this time reversed his own position on the main issue, conforming to the sentiment of his State. He was still a national man, having hopes of the Presidency. His wish to be nominated on the ticket with Jackson was not easily gratified, for there were strong reasons of policy why some northern man should be selected. Van Buren was rising as a formidable rival in point of influence; Clinton coveted the Vice-Presidential office for motives of his own, and the New York legislature, while nominating the hero of New Orleans for President, held its preference for the second place in abeyance. At the south, Crawford was Calhoun's personal enemy, deadly as a viper; and letters having been sent to Jackson's friends in the winter of 1827–28 informing them that Calhoun was unfaithful to him in the cabinet councils upon the conduct of the Seminole war, Calhoun corresponded with Ex-President Monroe on the subject, seeking proof to be used in his self-defence. Corruption, too, had

* Massachusetts capital had lately turned into woollen manufactures. The Lawrences (famous soon in this interest) were represented in the Harrisburg Convention.

earlier been charged by the press in some contracts he had made while Secretary of War; but appealing to the House of Representatives to investigate the business, he was fully exonerated from blame.*

Crawford, we should observe, had not without a struggle consented to the transfer of his political influence to a personal enemy so inveterate as Jackson, nor indeed to any one; and even after the compact was ratified he wrote Clay to acquit him of all blame in having voted as he did for Adams in preference to Jackson, at the same time mildly censuring him for taking office under a President who was so sure to be unpopular. Georgia, he said, could not have been driven under the banners of Jackson had it not been for her Indian difficulties with the administration.†

Fortune still favored Calhoun. His proofs convinced Eaton and other friends of Jackson that he ought not to be set aside. Crawford was persuaded to adjourn his own quarrels until after the election for the sake of harmony. Death itself was Calhoun's ally; for at the very moment that De Witt Clinton was considering how his name might be united with Jackson's, he was smote suddenly down and put to sleep in his ambitious illusions. Van Buren was relieved of a painful dilemma; and now as chief mourner he laid flowers upon Clinton's grave, while he joined the Clinton patrimony to his own share in the State Democracy, and was a leader indeed. Van Buren's plans worked to the portfolio of State as his share in the fruits of a national victory, and Calhoun's office was once more secure to him against all competitors for Jackson's favor.

Adams's adherents, meanwhile, had not failed to compare views as to the strength of candidates for the second honor. Monroe was at one time spoken of, and many an effort was made to draw him from his neutrality; Crawford, too, until his malignant temper towards the administration was exposed; Clay's name was mem-

1828.

* Annals of Congress, 1826–27; Monroe MSS. See Final Notes.
† Clay's Private Correspondence, February, 1828.

tioned but not well received. No southern name being available, Pennsylvania was selected in the hope of winning her electoral vote. A convention was held at Harrisburg, and Shulze, the governor of the State, declining the use of his name, Rush, the Secretary of the Treasury, was taken. Without national caucus or convention of any kind, the opposing tickets were thus placed complete before the people; "Adams and Rush" on one side, "Jackson and Calhoun" on the other.

Depressed though he had been at the first forebodings of political disaster, and much disposed since his father's death to indulge in morbid misgivings that his own health and faculties were giving way, Adams bore the onset of this fractious Congress better than most of the younger men who surrounded him. Aggression, indeed, always stirred the blood of an Adams like the sound of a trumpet, and he was not easily brought to bay. But members of the Cabinet now grew sick at heart. Both Barbour and Rush asked to go to London, to fill Gallatin's vacant place, a post which Webster also wished, whose heart was freshly seared by the deepest of domestic sorrows. With the Secretaries of War and the Treasury, at least, it was the refuge of the harbor to escape the tempest. "I cannot blame them," noted the President in his Diary. "The majority of the people in their respective States are inveterately opposed to the administration; and there is scarcely any condition so mortifying as that of being in a minority at home." Even Clay, usually so cheerful, grew faint and despondent as the flood of obloquy rolled remorselessly on, every effort failing to check its progress. The Senate of his State had actually undertaken to send for persons and papers and try for itself the question of imputed bargain and corruption. Failing in health and vexed, it would seem, by the President's unyielding temper over some appointments unpopular with the party, he now tendered his resignation. It was becoming impossible for him, he said, to

1828. Jan.

April.

discharge his official duties properly. He was suffering a torpid numbness, a general decay of the vital powers, which made a respite from public duties indispensable. "I must go home and die, or get better." *

This disorder, which was nervous and not paralytic, Adams treated with great tenderness, for the idea of parting with his Secretary, his fellow-victim under a harsh censure, was very painful to him. He persuaded Clay to take a long vacation, to visit the Springs, while he made the duties of the State department his own personal care. The English mission he concluded to give to Barbour, his Secretary of War, and let him withdraw his stake from the issue of the Presidential contest; for he was a man of fair and honorable mind.† In some of the lesser appointments, moreover, where he had been obstinate, he decided to make a sacrifice of his own opinions and feelings. And to please his Cabinet by deferring still further to their wishes, he made Peter B. Porter of New York, the new Secretary of War; an able man, who had served as commissioner under the Treaty of Ghent, and a stanch friend, moreover, of the administration, but, like Rush and Barbour, feebly supported by his own State. The amiable William Henry Harrison was appointed minister to Colombia, though Adams would rather have left that mission vacant.‡ By these appointments the President softened the censure he had lately provoked, when the death of General Brown made it incumbent upon him to select a new major-general for the army.§

May.

* 7 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs.

† Ib.; and see vol. 8.

‡ See 8 Adams's Diary, 4. Adams disliked Harrison personally, and commented severely at various times upon his office-seeking propensity. For Secretary of War his own preference was John Williams, of Tennessee. But finding that he stood alone in his opinions, he yielded to his Cabinet on both points.

§ Gaines and Scott had long discussed in bad temper their respective claims to seniority, next to Brown. Passing both by, Adams put in Macomb over their heads, against the decided voice of his Cabinet. Scott was furious, claimed that Macomb was still his junior, and showed a mutinous spirit for several years; but under Jackson the

John McLean's equivocal conduct under President Adams deserves our notice. As Postmaster-General he was the ablest man who had ever held that office, being prompt, methodical, and business-like in all the practical details of the position. But with Adams personally his relations were not cordial, nor was it long before Adams himself felt that he was too intimate with Calhoun. One had suggested that McLean might help the administration by his influence over Calhoun. "I shall be well enough satisfied," was the President's reply, "if Calhoun does not get an influence over him." Clay's keen insight quickly told him that McLean was a personal enemy, and he pressed the President to remove him; but Adams's rules permitted nothing of the kind. McLean, like Calhoun, kept up a filial correspondence with Monroe; he compared the late career of the country, prosperous, happy, and advancing, with the present prospect of political strife and party proscription, and, partially disclosing his own grief, he laid out as the line of conduct he meant to follow, the discharge of his official duties with perfect fidelity under this administration, while wholly declining to take an active partisan course of any kind. He had defended Adams, he said, when Adams was unjustly accused, and he would do the same by Jackson. He did not, he would admit, approve the circumstances under which Clay had been brought into the Cabinet; and from the measures of the present administration he stood entirely aloof, never having been consulted by any of its members on such subjects. Monroe, whose own disposition in the canvass was neutral from principle, and who found in McLean that ready sympathy for his pecuniary distress which many others had denied, thought such a course might be honorably pursued.*

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question was settled against him, and he returned to duty. Adams's Diary.

* Monroe MSS., 1826, 1827; letters to and from McLean. "No person at the head of government," responds Monroe, in careful phrase, "has, in my opinion, any claim to the active partisan exertions of those

The only inquiry is whether McLean was true to his own ideal of impartiality, an ideal by no means easy to cherish while party passion surged so fiercely. It certainly did not keep him from comparing this administration invidiously with the last; from aspersing Clay; from conveying to others little messages from Calhoun; from complaining that whenever he submitted papers to the President the appointment was made without asking his advice.* There is an opinion abroad, records Adams in the spring of 1827, that McLean is hostile to the administration; this, however, he very earnestly disclaims. His conduct is ambiguous, and he is much devoted to Calhoun, bearing also no friendship to Clay. This prompts him to act adverse to the administration.† Adams's suspicions of his fidelity were aroused when McLean, through Calhoun's interference, bestowed a clerkship in his department upon a talented but unprincipled writer, who was constantly abusing the administration in Calhoun's newspaper.‡ This same writer withdrew when criticism made the place too hot, and engaged in preparing from Jackson's papers a campaign biography, over which the Postmaster-General appears to have exercised some mysterious influence.§

Without wishing at all to impugn McLean's attachment to the President who first commissioned him,—an attachment of whose sincerity he gave various proofs,—one reads his letters with a painful misgiving that Monroe's feelings were artfully played upon to keep him in his correspondent's own line of neutrality; namely, so as to do nothing which could injure the chances of Jackson's election; and that this was a task assigned to the Postmaster-General by the Democratic managers as his appropriate one.

in office under him. Justice to his public acts, friendly feelings, and a candid and honorable deportment towards him, without forgetting what is due to others, is all that he has a right to expect, and in these I am satisfied you have never failed."

* McLean's letters in Monroe MSS.

† J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1827.

‡ 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 180.

§ Monroe MSS.

For more than once these managers seriously feared an embroilment between Jackson and Monroe which would bring out the latter on Adams's side. Nor is it unlikely that men high in the administration made strong efforts in that direction. Southard at a dinner party in the summer of 1826 made some casual remarks critical of the General, and commending Monroe as the real savior of New Orleans. The tale travelled to Jackson, like most other dinner-table gossip. He sent the Secretary an angry letter by the hand of Houston, asking an explanation, and affecting to regard the criticism as a charge officially made by a member of the administration. Southard's answer was cool and cautious, avoiding all offensive expressions. He sent it by the post, Houston declining to transmit the letter because it was sealed; and Jackson in due time made a rejoinder. But Jackson's partisans had meantime, at a battle anniversary banquet, turned the tables by ascribing all the praise of the victory to the General, as though his own government had been negligent in sending him supplies. This much annoyed Monroe, in whose heart the slight his claim had encountered in Congress from Jackson's friends was already rankling. He wished to take no part in politics, but to defend his honor if assailed. Explanations followed through mutual friends, and the affair was set right without a breach, so that both men should be honored, as they doubtless deserved, without the disparagement of either. 1826–27.

But Southard and other Adams leaders would have drawn Monroe into the campaign if they could; and another effort, in fact, was made to enlist the name and influence of both the surviving Ex-Presidents on the side of the administration. Virginia's popular vote, as districts were then divided, carried its true weight only where electors were elected in a Presidential contest; and so intolerable had become the yoke of the tide-water minority which ruled at Richmond, that a convention was impending to remodel the State constitution so as to give members their proper share of influence in the State. 1828.

Taking advantage of this feeling, which condemned the violence of Governor Giles and his set, the Adams party called a convention, which met in January, 1828, to nominate Presidential electors. It was hoped that the project would please by its novelty, and that Virginia would thus set an impressive example before her sister States. The two Ex-Presidents, Madison and Monroe, were placed at the head of the State electoral ticket. McLean was the first to express the uneasiness with which Calhoun, Ingham, and other opposition leaders viewed this action; and Jackson's party friends were relieved when, after a long delay, it was announced that each of the Ex-Presidents had refused the use of his name, and decided to remain neutral in the canvass.* Hence it happened that the Virginia nominating convention, though respectable, failed to make the national impression hoped for.

1828. January.

In the summer of 1828 Bache, the postmaster at Philadelphia, turned out a serious defaulter, and mixed up in his transactions was the establishment of a Democratic newspaper, in which Ingham and Thomas Sergeant appeared to have had an interest. Sergeant was a brother-in-law of Bache, and brother of John Sergeant, one of Adams's leading supporters in Congress. McLean procured John Sergeant's indorsement and the President's consent to Thomas Sergeant's appointment as Bache's successor quite hastily, and, as it afterwards seemed, by unworthy stratagem. There was a great outcry in Philadelphia against the appointment, and the President and John Sergeant both suffered for it; and when the facts came out the impropriety of it was manifest. McLean admitted that the appointment was made upon the advice of Ingham, one of the bitterest enemies of the administration.

1828. May–June.

* Monroe MSS. ; Madison's Writings. Both Madison and Monroe pointedly refused to be placed on the list of Presidential electors. Their letters were not promptly made known; and the tardiness on the part of the officers of this convention, both in notifying and publishing their replies, impressed the Ex-Presidents unpleasantly.

An extraordinary indulgence to Bache, the defaulter, which was likely to result in a heavy loss to the public, was here traceable to McLean's political connections with Ingham and with Vice-President Calhoun, of whom Ingham was a ready tool. McLean expressed real grief at his present indiscretion, and at the same time strongly protested his devotion to the administration. But over this damaging revelation Clay and Barbour lost all patience; they were both strenuous that McLean should be at once dismissed. The President's course was characteristic. He looked carefully into the facts. He assured himself that McLean's conduct was that of deep and treacherous duplicity, and that for three years he had been using the extensive patronage of his office in undermining the administration with the people.* But his rule being an inflexible one not to remove an officer unless the proofs were clear against him, he left McLean undisturbed, and appointed no new Postmaster-General.

The campaign of 1828 opened with a flourish of trumpets on either side. For popular effect, the Virginia electoral convention, of which we have spoken, was contrived by the partisans of "Adams and Rush," while those of "Jackson and Calhoun" arranged a brilliant battle celebration in New Orleans which the hero should attend in person as the guest of the State. The legislature of Louisiana issued a formal invitation, which was accepted, and the demonstration was made both popular and imposing. Jackson, leaving home with a numerous suite, landed at the levee with great pomp from the deck of a Mississippi steamboat, to receive the loud welcome of fellow-citizens, brother soldiers, and marshals of the ceremonies; and during the four days of high festival which followed Democrats from all parts of the Union vied in zealous attention. To deputations from States far distant, whose fulsome congratulations were formally presented, Jack-

1828.

January 8.

* Adams's Diary, June, 1828.

son returned answers couched in high-flown rhetoric, and yet so well expressed that the Adams party were driven to asserting that his facile scribes must have written them for him.

Jackson had long been dubbed "Old Hickory," and the hickory and the oak stood as the accepted emblems this year of the two Presidential candidates. The Democratic youth would gather with transparencies to plant hickory poles and, dancing furiously round them, would toss up their hats and shout "Jackson forever!" The Adams youth would attack and tear down these poles where they found them planted, and riots ensued. But the hurrah and enthusiasm was chiefly on the Jackson side. So marked was the apathy among Adams's followers that Adams, with great self-denial, consented to show himself in Baltimore and other cities on the northern seaboard for the sake of helping the cause, if possible, though sarcastic to himself over some of the grotesque features of such a tour.* When friends proposed, however, that he should contribute money for the canvass, he positively refused; and this whole practice of circulating newspapers, pamphlets, and handbills he condemned, as tending to render the elections altogether venal.†

Never had there been a political campaign in America so scurrilous as this. That of 1800, though vile enough, had not stirred into the sediments of society so deeply. "Coalition" was the charge on one side, "combination" on the other. Every possible change was rung by the Jackson men upon the phrase "bargain and corruption" to keep the iniquity of the Clay and Adams alliance in the minds of the people. Adams was accused of Federalism, of Freemasonry, of Unitarianism, of being stingy, grasping, haughty, sel-

* See Adams's Diary, August, 1828. At Baltimore a Jackson meeting was held in the square opposite the hotel where the President went through his hand-shaking ceremony. Adams heard the voice of the stump orator "like the beating of a mill-clapper," as he expressed it, declaiming upon the sins of the administration when he himself retired to bed.

† J. Q. Adams's Diary, March, 1828.

fish, of using the executive power to abridge the rights of States and the liberties of the people, and of wasting the public money. One of the grossest slanders charged him with pandering while abroad to the sensuality of a Russian court. His old accounts were misstated to his prejudice; so, too, his use of the secret service funds. It was complained that he had bought a billiard-table for the White House, and furnished the East Room in far too sumptuous a style. Jackson, in turn, was accused of inhumanity and a bloodthirsty disposition, and the duels, quarrels, and manifold errors of his past life were brought up against him. He had butchered Indians, English adventurers, and six militiamen; and handbills were issued headed by a coffin-lid and the inscription of each victim's death. Jefferson, it was claimed, believed him unfit to be trusted with executive powers. Lawless as Governor of Florida, he was sure to make a lawless President. He was a slaveholder, a violent and ignorant man. Nothing wounded the General so deeply as some infamous thrusts made at his marriage by some of the scavengers of the press, and the slander of his wife, a pious and respectable woman. Imputations were hot, and no quarter was asked or given on either side.

In this campaign the Adams men used the old name of National Republican, while the Jackson men were commonly distinguished as Democrats. Adams had the better educated and the better born people on his side, but these betrayed too often an arrogant disposition, and they jeered instead of befriending those whose early circumstances had been less fortunate than their own. They scoffed at the illiterate and grog-shop Democracy. Jackson himself was illiterate, and the administration tried awkwardly to prove this while Congress was in session.* But illiteracy, and grog-shops besides, commanded in this country a vote.

* See 7 J. Q. Adams's Diary. Choice specimens of Jackson's letters, grammar and spelling, were sent to Congress under a call of the House. But the House printers, according to usage, corrected the spelling when setting up the type, so that the effect intended was not produced.

The untutored instinct of the country went strongly out to Jackson; the class which had been kept back, which was working its way up, which had longed to be led by a man of the people. Hero worship, jealousy of the rich and favored, jealousy of class power, rude common sense, and the desire to see fair play,—all these elements, with better ones and baser,—in a word, the fierce Democracy with its friends fought on his side. Before the well marshalled host Adams and his ill compacted party went down. Foes in the front and traitors in the ranks would have been odds too great for any candidate against one of Jackson's universal popularity. The west, the south, all but a lesser fragment of the middle section, joined hands together to compass this defeat; only New England remaining constant to the party and the men in power.

1828. November.

There was nothing strange in all this. For full two years not a real doubt had been tenable save as to whether Jackson's majority would be larger or smaller. No one had snuffed defeat in the air more unerringly than Adams himself. A minority President to begin with, every important step he had taken, just or ill-advised, increased all the same the odium of his administration. "The North assails me," he cried, in his anguish, "for my fidelity to the Union; the South for my ardent aspirations of improvement." * He foresaw the fury of the blast and bared his breast to the tempest, not like a leader of men, but as a Christian martyr; trying to rescue nothing from the wreck for himself or his party friends, and planning no means of retreat.

The electoral votes cast in 1828 numbered 261. Of these Jackson received 178, Adams 83, and 131 sufficed for a majority. The result showed that Adams still held the States which had given him an unbroken support in 1824, but lost where the votes were that year scattered; and that the Jackson party had not only absorbed the Craw-

* J. Q. Adams's Diary, February, 1829.

ford support since, but drawn all of Clay's States over.* In a word, the open alliance which brought Clay into the administration gained Adams nothing. The proposal of national improvement, which had been his boldest stroke of policy, won him not a single State. He had just one electoral vote less than he received in 1824, while the electoral votes given to Jackson exceeded by one vote the united votes of Jackson, Crawford, and Clay that year. In the vote for Vice-President, Calhoun fell slightly behind his ticket; for in Georgia Crawford's enmity deprived him of seven out of nine of the electoral votes of that State. In all Tennessee Adams and Rush obtained less than 3,000 popular votes; many towns turning out to cast their entire poll for Jackson and Calhoun.

A yelling mob in Philadelphia, soon after it was known that Adams and Rush were defeated, gathered by night about the house of Binns, who had printed the coffin handbills, bearing a real coffin, in which they proposed carrying him around the city; but Binns had barricaded his premises, and the rioters were foiled.†

Kentucky, whose State election was held in August, had been this year the first battle-ground of the national parties. In Metcalfe, a popular member of Congress, who, after a custom which seemed strange and unbecoming in New England eyes, went travelling round the State and making speeches to the voters, the Adams party elected a governor; but his poll was close, and the opposition gained the legislature, and the electoral vote besides. Of New York, the administration had been somewhat hopeful since Clinton's death. This foremost among second-rate statesmen left little behind him but the memory of a crowning service to his State. He had consumed a fortune in hiring writers and runners to puff up his pretensions to the Presidency from time to time. Scarcely was he in the grave before his children were ex-

1828. August.

* See Tables in Appendix.

† 3 Parton's Jackson; newspapers of the day.

pelled from the paternal roof, and the sound of the sheriff's hammer mingled with loud public lamentations at the loss of a benefactor. Justice Thompson, formerly of Monroe's cabinet, was named by the Adams party for governor in the fall of 1828; and Granger, the strongest of Anti-masons in the State, lent his name and support to this ticket. Ever since the mysterious abduction and disappearance of William Morgan, who was thought to have been murdered for revealing the secrets of the Freemasons, there had been a growing excitement in the northern and western parts of the State against an order with which Clinton was identified, as well as General Jackson. The
November. Anti-masons, notwithstanding Granger's defection, made their separate State nominations in convention. Against all these opposition forces Van Buren kept the Democracy well organized, and, accepting himself the nomination for Governor in the emergency, carried New York State by a large majority.

A change in the State law since 1824 had given the election of electors in New York to the people; and as this election was held by districts, Adams received 16 out of its 36 electoral votes. But Pennsylvania, which chose no governor this year, and Ohio, as well as Virginia, gave an entire support to Jackson; the first-named State
November. returning a popular majority of nearly two to one in his favor.

On the whole this triumph was one of popular principles, and, in a sense, of the military, or at least the mobilizing spirit in politics. There was an issue of taste as between individual leaders, a repetition of the experience of 1824, with the range narrowed down to two strongly typical and opposite candidates, and as yet an imperfect grouping of principles about the person of the successful one. In New York, Pennsylvania, and the West, Jackson had been supported as the firm friend of a high tariff and internal improvements; in the South, as the friend of southern interests, to which this whole "American system" was opposed. The struggle had really commenced

before the Adams administration was formed; and the only pledge as yet distinctly made by Jackson's friends was that reform of some kind would be brought about in the practical conduct of affairs.

A singular strain of violence marked the whole progress of the Presidential canvass in South Carolina during the eventful summer and autumn of this year. 1828. Shortly after the passage of the tariff act and the adjournment of Congress, and before they dispersed for their homes, the delegation of that State held a meeting at Hayne's house in Washington to discuss what course they ought to pursue. Mitchell, one of the delegates present, charged soon after that the purpose of this meeting was treasonable. This Hayne and others of the delegates positively denied, while at the same time admitting by their own versions, that in the meeting, called, as they termed it, for a free interchange of views, there were bold threats of separation, unless Congress should speedily repeal the new tariff act; McDuffie and James Hamilton, like Hayne himself, declaiming with great violence.* Incendiary publications now began to appear in various parts of South Carolina. Anti-tariff meetings were held in leading towns, at which inflammatory resolutions were passed, and Hamilton and others of the delegation were seen on the stump discussing the possibilities of seccession. On the anniversary of the battle of Fort Sullivan northerners were warned of South Carolina's valor when called upon to defend her rights, her

* See 35 Niles's Register, setting out these various statements. One of these delegates, James Hamilton, claimed that in case South Carolina should resist the tariff, the federal government had no right to coerce a sovereign State by enforcing an unconstitutional law at the point of the bayonet. Hayne concurred fully in this, and freely rejoiced, as he said, for the South and its liberties that the regular army of the United States was a mere handful of men; that no Southern militia would take up arms against them; nor would Virginia and North Carolina ever permit the passage of federal troops through their territories for the purpose of subjecting the Palmetto State. But this meeting seems to have generally agreed that nothing ought to be done to injure the chances of Jackson's election.

interests, and her honor. "Beware the rattlesnake of the South!" was the cry. All this blustering, Adams surmised, was used to carry the election against him by intimidation, and should that fail, to lay the foundation for forcibly resisting the laws, so as to break down or overawe his administration soon after the contest should be decided.*

While these brilliant but reckless young leaders of the South Carolina aristocracy, who represented the State in Congress, were seen firing the heart of the State, sober citizens like Ex-Governor Williams interposed with prudent counsel, regarding the rash movement with disfavor. Georgia showed no readiness to be swept into the dangerous current, having much calmed down in tone. The same may be said of Virginia, though Giles, Floyd, and the Richmond clique had used bold words for southern rights. Madison made sport of Giles's "Hudibrastic gun," which hurt by its own recoil.† There were new subjects which now engaged the interests of Virginians far more than the tariff. But Giles, disputatious as he was, always ready for a combat of the tongue or pen, and a quarrelsome dotard in these last years; a man who had never read or studied, but gathered his ideas by conversation with able men, fought the Adams administration so long as it remained above water. His course was now nearly run; but he lived long enough to see Jackson come into power and his own State remodel its constitution.

That the staple States, and South Carolina most of all, were in deep discontent over the new tariff is not for a moment to be doubted. How much of this discontent was due to injury or prejudice we shall not inquire. The expression was spontaneous in a measure, and seemed to flow directly from the united protests of various southern legislatures, antedating the act of 1828, which we have already set forth, and which pronounced the protective policy un-

* See J. Q. Adams's Diary, July, 1828.
† Madison's Writings, 1829.

constitutional. Large allowance, too, must be made for the electioneering spirit in the heat of a Presidential canvass. But granting all this, the inflammable materials now heaping up in the Palmetto State were placed there by the men who had gathered in Hayne's house, and most unquestionably as a result of their pre-determination to fire the southern mind and prepare to rule or ruin. Behind that meeting, and in shaping out, through the earlier discussions, those ingenious arguments for the protection of slavery and for free trade in slave products, must have been a master spirit. That master spirit, as all indications point, was not Hayne, but Calhoun.* But as the second officer of the Union and a candidate for the suffrages of the whole people he at first concealed his hand, while lesser sons of South Carolina took the open responsibility. To Duff Green, of Washington, who edited the *Telegraph*,—how insignificant that word before electricity was bridled and made our swift messenger,—Calhoun wrote from his home in the summer of 1828 like one who is trying to restrain his impetuous fellow-citizens within the bounds of moderation. The great ground we have taken, he says, the great principle on which we stand is, that the tariff act is unconstitutional and must be repealed; that the rights of southern States have been destroyed and must be restored; that the Union is in danger and must be saved. To this our writers ought to be directed.† Green's paper was the Vice-President's organ, and the recognized opposition press of Adams's administration; being, in fact, the reconstructed *City Gazette;* and to Calhoun's influence Green was now indebted for the public printing of the Senate. Green complied with his preceptor's suggestion, and the *Charleston Mercury* took up the same strain.‡

1828. July.

* McLean, so intimate at this time with the Vice-President, wrote privately in 1831 to a friend, "Calhoun, I fear, has gone forever. For four years past he has been infatuated with his Southern doctrines. *In him they originated.*" Monroe MSS.

† Newspapers of the day, July, 1828.

‡ The Charleston Mercury used threatening words: "We do not wish

With Monroe Calhoun also corresponded, as though to fortify himself by the Ex-President's views; at first adopting still more scrupulously the tone of an impartial observer. He saw, he said, great excitement in the staple States against the tariff, nor thought it strange that those people, being almost universally embarrassed, should attribute it to the high duties, and hence exhibit an excess of feelings. "But I feel confident," he continues, "that the attachment to the Union remains unbroken with the great body of our citizens. Yet it cannot be disguised that the system pushed to the present extreme acts most unequally in its pressure on the several parts, which has of necessity a most pernicious tendency on the feelings of the oppressed portions." * This led to a temperate discussion between these two statesmen as to the evil of such unequal laws, and the proper remedy to seek against them. Monroe in a kind and fatherly way opposed Calhoun's theories, while owning to the high honor of southern men who thought differently from himself on the subject, and were governed by what they deemed their duty to their immediate constituencies. My own views, he says, are founded in experience and a particular consideration of the state of the southern country, and especially where the slaves exceed in number the white population. We should provoke no issue to shake the system. The best way is to let the experiment operate, and appeal to other motives in case the result should correspond with anticipations. To appeal to disunion may have a different effect; and if the power to regulate trade is to have no internal operation whatever, may not eastern and western States hereafter find it for their interest to break off? †

1828. July.

August.

1829. January.

A singular change truly was Calhoun's mind now undergoing in his new-born infatuation for southern rights under

disunion now, but the Union will have to decide either to repeal the tariff or compel us to obey it."

* Monroe MSS.

† Ib., July, 1828–Jan., 1829. See Final Notes.

the spur of an ambition still wavering in its upward endeavors to the chair which Washington and Monroe had occupied. His speeches in favor of internal improvements and of a tariff in 1816 made no mention of the federal constitution or of constitutional objections. He was at that date a fervent protectionist in policy. In 1817 the last great speech ever made by him in the House of Representatives discussed the constitutional question of internal improvements, and favored such improvements as constitutional. In 1824 he appeared to be of the same general opinion. And yet he now and henceforth pronounced the tariff unconstitutional; and inasmuch as he had uttered nothing on that point in 1816,—for no statesman in that day had dreamed of such an assertion,—professed, when pressed in debate, that he had constantly reserved his views on that question hitherto.

Now that all was over, and the bitter contest had been known to terminate unfavorably to John Quincy Adams and his administration, the excitement of tariff and southern rights for a time died out. Southerners, like men of other sections, waited with hope and curiosity for the inauguration of a new President, and the development of a policy which could not be forecast. The legislature of Georgia on assembling received from Forsyth, its new governor, a temperate message. In that of South Carolina a stack of mad and menacing resolutions offered by various bold spirits of the new school was set aside. But in South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia, the legislatures all agreed in declaring their opinion that the new tariff act was unconstitutional, and advanced, moreover, to the ground that the constitution of the United States is a compact of whose infraction States are competent to judge.*

The long tension of political fury throughout the Union was now followed by a season of languor. Vilification ceased; and those of the defeated party submitted with patience to the popular verdict, however much they de-

* Newspapers of the day, 1829; Niles's Register, etc.

plored it. Clay returned to his desk with renewed health and spirits. Southard was the only sick member of the cabinet this winter, and the only one, moreover, who had succeeded in carrying his own State for his party. The administration preserved a dignified composure before the country. To wind up the affairs of its trust, originating nothing, and to turn ever the stewardship to a successor in the best condition possible, was the last remaining concern to which its efforts were devoted.

Congress, whose last session began with the month of December, transacted the public business, moreover, with less interruption from political discussions and with less party asperity than at its former gathering. At the same time this body inclined to provide only for the immediate necessities of the government, and avoid new legislation as much as possible. The main subject of interest at this session was the Cumberland Road, which was already fast going to destruction for want of proper repair. The House decided, by a considerable majority, against the principles of the Monroe veto, that it was both constitutional and expedient to erect gates and impose a system of tolls in order to preserve the road. But the Senate, without discussing questions of constitutional power, struck out the section based upon that principle, at the same time consenting to expend $100,000 for repairing the bridges, walls, and other works between Cumberland and Wheeling,* besides extending the road from Zanesville westward, and cutting timber and digging banks preparatory to running the turnpike from Indianapolis east and west through the State of Indiana.† A strong disposition already appeared in Congress to relieve the nation of a constant burden and annoyance by turning the road over in sections to the several States which it traversed. To the policy of improvement by subscribing to local enterprises the twentieth Congress showed no little favor. Money was voted out of the treasury

1828. Dec. 1. 1829. March 3.

* Act March 3, 1829.
† Acts March 2, 1829.

and public land donated to the Chesapeake and Ohio, and various other canals, which came lobbying for aid; the lion's share of the national benevolence going, as in other years, to States whose good will the Democracy thought it prudent to cultivate. Much to Adams's chagrin, for he had seen his early appeal for star-eyed science bear one little fruit, a bill which equipped an exploring expedition for the South seas passed the House, but failed in the Senate. Many bills fell through in both houses, by not being acted upon before the adjournment; and among them all which related to retrenchment. The President's latest appointments the Senate was not disposed to confirm, preferring to keep the vacancies open till after the 4th of March; and for this reason Crittenden of Kentucky, Clay's warm friend, failed to succeed upon the bench of the Supreme Court Justice Trimble of the same State, whose death had occurred in 1828; he took in consequence a statesman's career.

Thus ended the administration of John Quincy Adams; and whatever opinion may be entertained of the policy and wisdom of its official acts and efforts, all must agree that it was a strong one in point of influence upon national interests, and most unquestionably a clearly defined one in point of character; bearing the impress of Adams's own vigorous and independent judgment, scholarly habits, and sobriety. In foreign affairs, Adams could show no bold achievement, but rather a series of misfortunes; nevertheless the national dignity and self-respect had been constantly maintained under trying circumstances, and among other arrangements those with Spanish American countries and Brazil marked a new episode in the extension of liberal commerce upon the Western continent.* It was in its domestic policy that the character and purposes of this administration

* The first of continental or Spanish American treaties or conventions, that with the republic of Colombia, was concluded under Monroe, but ratified as the first in order under this administration; that with Brazil was in like manner concluded under this administration, but ratified as first in order after Jackson's accession.

were most deeply felt; and in this respect, the strongest points of controversy had arisen between the nation and particular States. But the condition of the country was highly prosperous on Adams's retirement, and this, he said to himself, "takes from the loss of public care all its pain." Rush, a very able manager of the public finances, made a most flattering exhibit in his final report. The revenue of 1829 would equal and probably exceed that of 1828; that of 1828, larger than had been estimated when the twentieth Congress first assembled, paid all interest and current expenses, increased the resources and improved the condition of the country, applying besides more than $9,000,000 towards the principal of the public debt. The debt itself was in a constant course of liquidation, having been reduced during this administration $30,373,000, and leaving due on the first of January, 1829, $58,362,000. Adams surrendered to his successor a government at peace with all the world, discordant perhaps internally, and yet not so as to forbid the hope of correction by a prudent management; with an increasing revenue, a scale of expenditures by no means extravagant, and an overflowing treasury. Could current outlays be economized, or could they not? The outgoing administration had, at all events, laid no heavy burdens upon the people for the next to take up; and out of all the infamous abuse, scandal, and vilification heaped upon him, Adams emerged pure as refined gold.

Adams accepted the popular decision as putting an end forever to his responsible public career. The call to duty, should it come, he still would not shrink from, no matter how humble the post. But the party which bore his name was crushed, and never could he aspire to form or lead another. He resigned himself to worldly unpopularity as one who enters a monastery. A few admirers proposed somewhat hastily to become historians of his administration, and asked for facts. He took up the pen himself, finding it needful to do so in his own vindication; reviewing the military imbroglio with Scott over Macomb's appointment,

and again preparing a lengthy response to eastern Federalists who had been startled by the Giles revelations.* These literary tasks he pursued with a pen dipped in gall. He showed what he had written to intimate friends; they thought his style too sharp and bitter. He felt the force of such criticism, and recalled the Scott pamphlet after it had gone into the printer's hands, saying that instead of punishing Gaines and Scott he must begin by punishing himself. His document upon the eastern Federalists, upon which he labored for months after his retirement, he also laid aside after finishing it. The bitterness of his heart he struggled with Christian fortitude to suppress, though writhing under a double persecution.

In the anguish of his wounded spirit Adams had come into closer confidence with his Secretary of State, to whose alliance he owed the gladdest thrill and the sharpest pang of his life, and who, like himself, had borne with unflinching courage the shafts of malice which sought them out together. There appeared no longer in their intercourse the old distrust, the old rivalry. Adams firmly believed that Clay would soon rise again in the public esteem, that the "bargain" tale would be forgotten, and that the principles for which both had been sacrificed would as surely win at last as the cause of the Union itself. Jackson's success, though complete, he thought momentary; and elements so vicious, so ignorant, so violent as those which had lifted him into power, were not likely to hold long together. That virtue and talent should rule in the high places was essential to his own ideal of a republic. To Clay, then, Adams willingly left the task of collecting the shattered remnants of his defeated party, massing and mustering the

* The letter from eastern Federalists was received by Adams about December, 1828. They called for names and evidence as to the design imputed to destroy the Union in 1808. That letter was drawn out by the publication in the National Intelligencer of the letter from Jefferson to Giles, which Giles had used to operate upon the elections. Adams's long and characteristic reply, which was left among his papers, has since his death been published in Henry Adams's Federalism. And see *supra*, p. 386.

recruited force, and under some new name leading them in person to victory.*

Experience under adversity, and the grave responsibility of public station, narrowing his range of selection, had steadied Clay's ambition once more, and given him a clearer purpose in life as a statesman. Constant to his chieftain, he had permitted no one to flatter him at the other's cost, and in his own mind he had been led to dwell upon the considerations of public good as a true rule for his guidance. To Crawford he had expressed himself ready to fall with Adams if he had erred; and as for popularity, he averred that this had not been the deciding motive of his public conduct, though he would not pretend to be regardless of it. "Is the measure right? Will it conduce to the general happiness and the elevation of the national character?" These were the questions he at length asked himself.† Clay took now the vacant post of command, and, with that buoyancy under disaster which was one of his most charming political traits, began at once the business of the next campaign. He sounded New England men in the House to ascertain if that section was likely to support him. "Whether I ought to be brought out and when," as he wrote to Brooke, his chief manager in Virginia, "I leave to my friends." But candidates, so he rightly advised, should not yet be presented, for it would be premature and offensive to do so before Jackson entered upon his office, unless Jackson's friends first took that step; the public at present wished tranquillity.‡

Feb. 11. On the day that Congress declared the electoral vote the President elect arrived at Washington, and took lodgings at Gadsby's. He was ushered into the city with artillery and a procession. He came a widower,

* See 8 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1828–29.

† Clay's Private Correspondence, 1828. Crawford had written that he did not blame him for voting as he did, for Adams in preference to Jackson, but that Clay ought not to have taken office under Adams. He acquitted Clay of all evil intention in so doing.

‡ Clay's Private Correspondence.

for his wife had died in December, and he left her fresh grave in the corner of the Hermitage garden, to take up the duties of a new station which called him far away. Jackson's affection was of the tenderest; and believing that his wife's life had been shortened by the scurrilous abuse of the Adams newspapers, a keen resentment mingled with his sorrow. He did not call upon the President after his arrival, for the *National Journal*, published in Washington, had taken a lead in the attacks upon his marriage, and, as this was an especial organ of the President's, he treated Adams as responsible for them. The imputation was truly unjust, for Adams had been privy to no such publication. But Adams could be as unyielding in temper as Jackson. He volunteered no explanation, but felt that he was entitled to the courtesy of a first call; so standing each on his own dignity, two men, once friendly in their intercourse, hardened into steel towards one another. Arrangements were politely made through the marshal for transferring possession of the White House in season for the General to receive his company there after the inaugural ceremonies. The 3d day of March saw the close of the present Congress and of the National Republican administration. Adams accepted the several resignations of his cabinet, and upon the advice of them all except Rush, determined not to attend the next day's inauguration exercises. At nine in the evening he left the official mansion and joined his family at a hired house, having purposed remaining in Washington until the summer.* He did not, following his father's example, hasten from the capital so as to put leagues between himself and the President elect before the noon of March 4th, but remained quietly within doors. Nevertheless a precedent was followed; and these annals record that the two Adamses were the two earliest Presidents of the United States who took no part at the induction of a successor.

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* See 8 J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1829.

CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF ANDREW JACKSON.

SECTION I.

PERIOD OF TWENTY-FIRST CONGRESS.

MARCH 4, 1829—MARCH 3, 1831.

THERE seemed to the staid and dignified social leaders of the capital something like a sudden irruption of barbarians upon this little Rome on the day Andrew Jackson was sworn in as President. "Hurrah for Jackson!" had been the cry on the streets ever since his arrival, and as Webster expresses it, the city was "full of speculation and speculators." Such crowds of visitors had called upon him daily at the tavern where he lodged, that his committee of arrangements were very anxious to have the White House ready in season for the 4th of March reception, for the guests would have broken down the stairways and made havoc of the rooms at such pent-up quarters as Gadsby's. The day of inauguration was warm and spring-like. A great crowd, numbering not less than 10,000, blocked up the vicinity of the eastern portico of the Capitol, where the ceremonies were to take place; they were repressed and kept at a proper distance by a ship's cable, which stretched across about two-thirds of the way up the long flight of steps in front. This was the first time that noble entrance, with its columns, one for each State of the Union, stood ready for use in such ceremonies. Jackson's tall form, as it emerged at high noon from among those columns, was the signal for shouts from the spectators which rent the air. Vice-President Calhoun had at 11 o'clock called the Senate to order and renewed his official oath. Jackson entered the Senate chamber shortly

1829. March 4.

before twelve, and at the appointed time the procession of dignitaries went out to the portico.

The inaugural address was brief, fervid in expression, but non-committal except in a promise or rather threat of reform. "The recent demonstration of public sentiment inscribes on the list of executive duties, in characters too legible to be overlooked, the task of *reform;* which will require particularly the correction of those abuses that have brought the patronage of the federal government into conflict with the freedom of elections, and the counteraction of those causes which have disturbed the rightful course of appointment, and have placed or continued power in unfaithful or incompetent hands." * At the close of this address the oath of office was administered by the venerable Chief Justice.

Out of respect to his wife's memory, Jackson had signified a wish to avoid all parade on this occasion. He rode on horseback from the Capitol to the White House after the ceremony was over, a great crowd following him, already encouraged by their success in forcing the barricades at the east front to shake hands with the man of the people. A lively writer of the day portrays the scene which followed at the palace. "The President was literally pursued by a motley concourse of people, riding, running helter-skelter, striving who should first gain admittance into the Executive mansion, where it was understood that refreshments were to be distributed." The halls of the White House were filled with a disorderly rabble, common people forcing their way into the saloons and mingling with the foreigners and distinguished citizens who surrounded the President. China and glass were broken in their struggle to get at the ices and cakes, though punch and other drinkables had been carried out in tubs and buckets to them; but had it been in hogsheads it would have been insufficient, besides unsatisfactory, to the mob who claimed equality in all things. "The confusion became more and

* Inaugural address, March 4, 1829.

more appalling. At one moment the President, who had retreated until he was pressed against the wall of the apartment, could only be secured against serious danger by a number of gentlemen linking arms and forming themselves into a barrier. It was then that the windows were thrown open, and the living torrent found an outlet. It was the People's day, the People's President, and the people would rule." *

Inauguration day passed, but the mob of strange faces was still to be seen hovering about. Strangers filled the anteroom and lobbies and all public places, though making less free henceforth with the White House apartments, and resolving themselves more into knots of politicians, most of whom compared notes freely and with jovial good nature, like men who know not how soon a fellow-struggler may get what he wants and be in a position to lend a helping hand. This was not the people all-ruling, but the people after office. A great and hungry multitude swarmed in the city, ravening up and down from morning to night; "too many to be fed without a miracle." The newspaper corps comprised a great part of this force, and it seemed as if every Jackson editor in the land had come to quarter upon the government, as though unable to make a decent living out of his press.

The cabinet list had been arranged a week before the inauguration, with Martin Van Buren of New York as Secretary of State; Samuel D. Ingham of Pennsylvania, Secretary of the Treasury; John H. Eaton of Tennessee, Secretary of War; John Branch of North Carolina, Secretary of the Navy; and John M. Berrien of Georgia, Attorney-General. It was not an array of names to compare in talent or moral worth with those of recent years, nor the best at Jackson's service. Van Buren, whose position had long been assigned him by rumor, was the only real states-

* Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith's sketch in Seaton's Biography. Judge Story and others confirm this account of the confusion at the White House. 3 Parton's Jackson; newspapers of the day.

man among them, and successfully as he had worked his way in life from humble beginnings and the training of a village academy, his talents had been too much wasted upon points of intrigue and political management. Of the others, Major Eaton, the only one capable of generous views of conduct, was smirched in private life. Ingham's claim was founded upon a campaign service in Pennsylvania as chief pamphleteer and defamer of Adams; Branch and Berrien were men of fair ability and good social position. All of these men were taken out of Congress, though Van Buren had left the Senate for a brief space to become Governor of New York; and all but Ingham came from the Senate, where Eaton, Branch, and Berrien, but not Van Buren, all voted with Jackson in 1825 against confirming Clay for Secretary of State. Three leading influences appear to have been considered in making up this cabinet: the Van Buren influence, the Calhoun influence, and that finally of Jackson himself, who had been determined to have one personal friend at least from his own Tennessee circle. Of these influences the two former already struggled for the ascendency. Jackson recognized the Van Buren influence in Van Buren; the Calhoun influence in Ingham, Branch, and Berrien; and Eaton he invited into the cabinet to please himself. But Branch and Berrien, at least, were not the men Calhoun himself wanted; no one of his bold South Carolina friends was taken, and in the cabinet as thus constituted unity of purpose was wholly out of the question.

With nearly eight thousand deputy post-offices under his charge, the Postmaster-General was too important a functionary to be treated longer as one of secondary rank. President Jackson set the example of inviting this officer of the government to the council board; and from henceforth the Postmaster-General became in effect the sixth member of the cabinet. McLean would have been retained in this place; but the threatened sweep of the offices alarmed him, for his instincts were conservative, and as Jackson thought a hickory broom indispensable for his purpose, a

political obligation was discharged by transferring the Postmaster-General who had served Monroe and Adams to the Supreme bench; the vacancy caused by Trimble's death, for which Crittenden was not confirmed, requiring a western man. McLean made an excellent justice for the remainder of his long life; but he was not half reconciled to a change which partook so nearly of political banishment, and in two months he was seen inveighing quite as bitterly against this administration as ever he had against the preceding one.* The new Postmaster-General appointed was William T. Barry, of Kentucky, a supporter of Clay in 1824, who broke away from him when he allied himself with Adams. Barry, though at one time in Congress, was little known by name or person beyond the borders of his own State, where he had lately made an unsuccessful run for governor as the Jackson candidate. Though an agreeable man, he bore no comparison with his predecessor in mental qualifications for a post of various and vexatious duties.

All of these appointments and various others, including officers of the customs, the Senate confirmed in the course of its brief special session in March. Thomas P. Moore, of Kentucky, too, displaced General Harrison in the mission to Colombia. Harrison had but lately sailed for his post; and singled out thus from among the diplomatic list for instant recall, there was little doubt that Jackson put the slight upon this most worthy soldier and gentleman because he was Clay's friend.

After the adjournment of the Senate the work of official proscription took a far wider scope and a reign of terror began. One comptroller and two auditors of the Treasury were turned out summarily to make room for two Jackson editors and the general's personal friend, Major Lewis. One of the dismissed auditors, Tobias Watkins, turning

* See Monroe MSS.; Adams's Diary; Clay's Private Correspondence; 1 Sargent's Public Men and Events.

out afterwards a defaulter, Jackson had him arrested, prosecuted, and thrown into jail; and the term of his sentence expiring, the President refused to remit the fines, but kept him imprisoned longer because he could not pay them. At one time he bade the marshal confine this prisoner in a solitary cell, and the officer pleading that he had no warrant for doing so, Jackson ordered the door of his apartment to be kept labelled "Criminal's Apartment," which was accordingly done. Such embezzlements had happened before and occurred again among those of Jackson's own selection; but Watkins, who was pursued with such unexampled severity, had, unfortunately for him, been Adams's personal friend and a most zealous partisan for his re-election.* The removals and new appointments to office, both in Washington and at distant points, went on meanwhile with a slow but incessant pace. They were made a few at a time, and in such a manner that office-holders were in a constant state of anxious suspense. Faithful service availed little to one who, no matter how guardedly, had preferred the defeated candidate for President; and while the secret inquisition continued, no one in office dared trust his neighbor. In this capital city, where government service had hitherto been pursued as a life vocation, and the government clerk, undisturbed in years past except for vice, incompetency, or infidelity, had lived with his wife, children, and dependents on his meagre pittance, shabbily clothed and lodged, but solaced by the thought that the tenure of the civil service was practically as secure and honorable as that of army or navy,—many of these men scions of the most illustrious families of the land,—public servants found all of a sudden that the badge they wore was that of the meanest servitude. They were unfitted to enter other business. All was gloom and agitation,—a state of things never before dreamed of. The great body of officials came and went at the usual hours

* See 8 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs. Adams was astonished as well as deeply affected by the disclosure of this officer's misconduct, and thought the wrong done to him and his own administration deserved a severer censure from himself than from Jackson.

with trembling of heart, each awaiting his fate in silence, all afraid to speak to one another. There were tale-bearers and spies ready to carry every casual remark to headquarters. The day's routine work went on in guarded silence, espionage, and secret intrigue. Silence itself might be interpreted to one's prejudice, for no one knew the rule by which displacement for electioneering activity would be made, and indeed there was none. The dread of removal, while this strange situation lasted, produced sometimes more misery than removal itself. A clerk in the war office, one of Jackson's own partisans in the late election, cut his throat from ear to ear from the mere terror of being dismissed; and another at the State Department, one of the best clerks in the civil service, went crazy with feverish excitement.

The very secrecy of the accusation—if the word accusation is deserved at all where the example set by those newly installed, from the President downwards, was to make vacancies by one means or another for as many as possible of the cormorant crowd which beat the doors, so that removal for cause was often the merest pretence—made the horror of dismissal the greater. One saw with sinking heart an official letter lying on his desk; and picking it up, he read that the Secretary was under the painful necessity of informing him that there would be no further occasion for his services after the end of the month, and that he might continue until that time or retire immediately, at his option. Many dismissals were more cruelly abrupt. The offence, if any, was not stated. The son of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and Vice-President of the United States, who supported his mother and four unmarried sisters out of a custom-house office he held in the port of Boston, found a new man nominated without warning in his place. In a transport of grief he went to Secretary Ingham, who refused sullenly to give him any reason for the change except that offices were not hereditary. Early in January, White, the delegate from Florida, called upon the President to inquire why twelve most popular officers

of that territory had been superseded by men newly appointed, most of whom could be shown fitter candidates for the treadmill than for public office. The General flew into a passion, and said that he had been abused from Dan to Beersheba for his removals, but had removed not a single man except for oppression or defalcation. White then went to Van Buren and, repeating the President's remark, asked him to state the specific instances of oppression or defalcation in question. The smooth-tongued Secretary looked up at him and blandly made answer, "The President's recollection must be at fault. We give no reasons for our removals." *

Over this painful business Jackson himself is seriously compromised in numerous instances. Witness after witness of strong credibility shows that he reassured men in office and their friends in the kindliest manner possible, notwithstanding which the axe suddenly and remorselessly fell. If the victim then called to remind the General of his promise he was likely to be ordered out of the house for his impertinence. Barney, the collector of Baltimore, was one of those who came early to the President, and told him frankly that his vote had been cast for Adams. Taking him warmly by the hand, the President praised him for having expressed his honest preference at the polls like any other citizen, and pledged his word that he should not be condemned unheard; but soon after the interview, without a moment's warning, this gallant patriot and soldier was turned out of office, and his wife and eight children reduced to indigence.† A faithful office-holder relates how he called upon the President and solemnly contradicted the charges made against him, which were in effect that he had taken an active part on behalf of Adams during the campaign. The General expressed himself perfectly satisfied, refused to enter further into the subject, and insisted

* See 8 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs; also 3 Parton's Jackson, with its citations.

† See various other instances related in 8 J. Q. Adams's Diary; Monroe MSS.; 3 Parton's Jackson, with citations.

that he should come into his private apartments, make the acquaintance of his family, and take a glass of wine; and yet the very next day this person's substitute appeared in the office, inquiring what was the nature of the work expected of him. Was it forgetfulness of his word that made Jackson act thus, or indecision under the pressure which bore upon him, or was it duplicity?

The only line of policy clearly foreshadowed when Jackson took the oath of office was "to reward his friends and punish his enemies;" and this he relentlessly pursued, whether the victim was treated with anger or courtesy. At the same time parasites gathered about him, who fed his jealousy and his desire of revenge. It was impossible that he should judge of the facts calmly and act upon a careful examination. He kindled at every spark. His mind was incapable of that mature and impartial investigation which alone enables one to reach just conclusions, and impulse controlled his decision. But Jackson's intuitions were keen: a glance of his searching eye told him more of a man than volumes of testimony; and yet intuitions will lead astray. His want of political information was largely compensated by native sagacity; and the great secret of his success consisted in keeping the common people, the majority, constantly by his side.

Though not to be resisted by mortal successfully, Jackson had little blind avenues of approach, by which one artful, and at the same time not unfaithful to his interests, might turn him with surprising ease. Vanity was a weakness with him; and the tale is at least plausible that one who could not get an office he wanted by the customary method won it and the General's heart besides by asking the gift of his old tobacco-pipe. Jackson had a brusque humor and enjoyed lively company. He liked young men about him who talked to the point, knew how to give and take, would stand up without flinching to defend him, and trod on his foibles very gently. Such men learned to love the old hero, and found promotion easy; for where Jackson's heart was enlisted he was very tender, and it was his

maxim never to forget friend or enemy. He carried the master in his manner, but could make men feel it a pleasure to serve him. In the midst of his bitterest proscription of the Adams office-holders, or, as he called it, "putting down misrule," during the summer of 1829, his private letters to friends in Tennessee show that he was a sick, unhappy old man, weary with the buzz of beggars and sycophants about him, and longing to retire and be at rest.*

How many changes were made in the civil list during the first year of Jackson's incumbency is not clearly known. Some have placed the number as high as two thousand; and Benton, as Jackson's defender, admits six hundred and ninety removals in all, of whom more than two-thirds were postmasters.† We should bear in mind, however, that under the new tenure of office act,‡ of which no advantage had hitherto been taken by a President, a vast number of offices might be changed as they fell vacant, without the need of any removal at all. And again, the removal of a few hundred of the chief removable officials, each with a great band of subordinates under his own control, involved of itself a vast persecution of salaried men in the government employ, to the degradation of the public service. The New York custom-house, with its revenue of $10,000,000, was taken from one of the best collectors in the country and given to the charge of the reckless Swartwout, whose theory of securing office was to bring influence to bear and "push like the devil," and whose utter unfitness to handle public moneys was soon made manifest.§ In many other places merit gave way to ignorance; and during the greedy scramble for plunder none picked up choicer morsels than the editors and party scullions whose pens had been busiest in the work of defamation. It rarely happened that better men supplanted the worse; and instead of correcting abuses which conflicted with the freedom

* See 3 Parton's Jackson.
† 1 Benton's Thirty Years.
‡ *Supra*, p. 175.
§ See 3 Parton's Jackson.

of elections, the course taken was the very one to endanger that freedom in the future. The former theory most rudely shaken by Jackson's course was that virtue and talents should have the first place of influence in the republic.

Except for the spiteful recall of Harrison, the diplomatic list was treated with comparative indulgence. Louis McLane superseded James Barbour at London; but in view of the new turn intended in British relations, this was not unfair. Brown was displaced at Paris, Alexander H. Everett at Madrid. No other important changes in the list of missions appear to have been made within the first year; and Jackson honored literature by selecting Washington Irving to be secretary of legation at London. In fact, the organized corps of partisan office-holders was desired for service at home, not abroad. Army and navy officers had a tenure of their own, and the same was true of the federal judges. Benton claims, moreover, that all those whose functions partook of the judicial, such as treaty commissioners, were left undisturbed.* William C. Rives was made minister to France, Cornelius P. Van Ness to Spain, and William P. Preble to the Netherlands. The mission to Russia was in 1830 bestowed upon John Randolph, and an odd prank he played in consequence. He sailed for his post in June, 1830, but remained there only ten days, and then departed suddenly for England, where he enjoyed his freedom for nearly a year; after which, returning home in October, 1831, he drew $21,407 from the government, with which he paid off some of his old private debts.† James Buchanan was afterwards appointed to Russia in his stead; and it has been well cited as a proof of that statesman's skill in conciliating friends that he should have so pacified Jackson, notwithstanding his halting testimony upon the charge of "bribery and corruption," as to receive this special mark of favor.‡ In Mexico

* 1 Benton's Thirty Years, which understates the number.

† This, says Mr. Henry Adams, is the most flagrant bit of diplomatic jobbery in the history of the United States. Adams's Randolph.

‡ See Curtis's Life of Buchanan.

a prejudice of long standing against Poinsett had an unfortunate influence upon our public relations. The case was gently handled, and instructions were prepared giving him the option to return or not; but before they were sent the Mexican government requested Poinsett's recall, and the request was complied with, a *chargé* succeeding him.

The terrors of 1829 have since been witnessed upon each transfer of the national authority from one great party to another. But here was first set the baneful precedent; and until the practice is radically changed the people will not feel free to give their confidence to different parties in turn while a change of general policy is necessarily accompanied by a sweep of the offices. Jefferson came into place finding a complete monopoly of the offices in the hands of his adversaries. He made some dismissals to give an equilibrium to the patronage, but never in principle or practice countenanced a violent and wholesale change for establishing his followers. With Jackson came an upheaval of the social stratum; but he found the offices filled by friends and opponents. He and Adams had lately belonged to the same party, and Adams had scrupulously refrained from disturbing any one by reason of his political opinions. To give to every change of parties as the national patronage grows the character of a revolution is to imperil the safety of our institutions at a vital point and put up the republic to sale. Even though the maxim were just that "to the victors belong the spoil," no loyal general who leads a conquering army will sack and distribute among his personal followers the province he has captured in the name of his country. "Government is a trust," as Clay has well said, "and the officers of government are trustees. And both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people. Official incumbents are bound, therefore, to administer the trust, not for their own private or individual benefit, but so as to promote the prosperity of the people." *

* See Clay's speech, 1829; Niles's Register. With the extension of the Civil Service rules and under the forbearing example furnished by Pres-

To Jackson's wonderful personality and force of character and the many excellent traits of his administration this narrative will do full justice. But he was the veriest autocrat that ever ruled or could have ruled in the name of the American people while this republic was at peace.

Next to his patriotism, which cannot be questioned, and the intense wish to do right by the people who had trusted him with the highest proofs of their confidence, the ruling passions of his breast were personal resentment and gratitude. Public and private considerations of duty blended inseparably in his thoughts; his party was the country, they who stood by him were friends of the country, and they who opposed were its enemies. Personal fidelity was the test by which he tried all men, nor did he apply it with accuracy, for he could not detach his feelings from his judgment; all who were not with him were against him. The whole working of his mind was illogical, and exposed constant inconsistencies in his course of action. The avenger in his own person of the cruel slanders heaped upon him and the wife but lately torn from his arms, he made no principle out of retribution, for none won his esteem more readily than the traducers, equally vile, of Adams. The general who had besought Monroe to exterminate the monster "party," he was the first to create the monster of a party cemented by the spoils the moment the civil patronage came into his own hands. The senator who had laid down his office, proposing that the exercise of the appointing power should be purified by amendments forbidding the re-election of a President and the appointment of members of Congress to office, not only accepted a re-election in due course, but within two months after he first became President appointed more members of Congress to office than had any of his predecessors during a term of four or eight years. Nay, his inaugural address, whose only distinct pledge con-

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ident Cleveland and his successors, the evil described in the text has been to some extent diminished (1903).

sisted in the paragraph which defined as the abuses requiring correction the conflict of federal patronage with the freedom of elections and the continuance of power in unfaithful or incompetent hands, prepared the way to those very abuses; for political activity in his behalf received full absolution, and the principle was now boldly acted upon for the first time that faithful and competent incumbents must stand aside in order that noisy partisans may be rewarded. By such a course of action Jackson accomplished two objects, both characteristic of his nature: his strong disposition to reward or punish was gratified, and a national party became an army of occupation under a commander-in-chief; intrenched in the offices and with all the resources of national influence at command to resist, if need be, majorities and public opinion. Jackson believed in party discipline after the Van Buren Regency, which so long ruled the Empire State. "I am no politician," he would say, "but if I were one, I would be a New York politician."

The late President watched silently the strange current of affairs, for he lingered in the city, which he still made his winter abode, planning to pass the summer months in the old homestead at Braintree. Through the newspapers he had requested his friends not to visit him on the 4th of March; and while the voracious crowd stormed the palace he had just vacated, guzzling orange punch and standing in their hob-nailed boots on the damask-covered chairs, Adams took a quiet horseback ride about College Hill, passing the day drowsily away. He could scarcely realize his new situation. "My time," he writes, "is now all leisure, like an instantaneous flat calm in the midst of a hurricane." But literary composition kept him from being idle; with Cicero and Plutarch to study, and the story of Brutus, Octavius, and Antony to read afresh, rest could not become rust; and in his daily rides and walks he would compose verses in imitation of La Fontaine's fables or the odes of Horace. A circle of his old friends remained

constant to him, but he was quite shut off from intercourse with his successor's administration. Not one of the new cabinet did him the civility to call, except Van Buren, who, punctilious to avoid all personal offence, paid him a morning visit with his assistant secretary, a son of Alexander Hamilton.*

Adams's retirement from public life continued in truth but two years; and the present season of respite proved his last. Neither Barbour nor Porter of his cabinet was prominent again in public affairs, though both lived many years longer. Rush went abroad for a time on private business, and gradually grew into a Democrat. Wirt, one of those strongly domestic men, whose theory of life is to add to his resources an acre and a child every year, found himself well occupied with the rich harvest of professional fees for the remainder of his days. Southard's retirement was but temporary; and in his own State, where he was very popular, he was presently chosen attorney-general and then governor.

Clay's movements were watched with the liveliest speculation and curiosity by the friends of the late administration; for to him people looked as the new leader of the party now in opposition. He left Washington for his Ken-

1829. tucky home shortly after Jackson's inauguration, receiving spontaneous tokens of love and confidence all the way; taverns and toll-gates were thrown open to him, and dinners, suppers, and balls arranged in his honor. Arriving at Lexington with his family, and taking up the farmer's life once more on his Ashland homestead, he kept an eye upon politics while he repaired his house and barns, stocked his place with merino sheep, and rejoiced in his newly-found freedom. His Kentucky friends were solicitous of his interests. A winter's trip to New Orleans was presently arranged to keep him before the public and aid his popularity at the southwest. For the present he remained in retirement, criticising the new administration in

* J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1829.

an occasional speech; but the plan was to send him to the United States Senate, after two years, his reappearance in Congress to be the signal for bringing him forward with a boom as next President.*

Of State events this year the most remarkable was the meeting of the Virginia convention. After repeated failures the project for this assemblage had been carried by a popular vote a few weeks before the late Presidential election, and a body of men fresh from the people assembled at Richmond on the 5th of October, among its delegates being the foremost of sons still living. Madison nominated Monroe to preside; no other nomination was made, and Monroe was conducted to the chair by Madison and Marshall. The labors of this convention terminated the following January in the adoption of an amended constitution, which extended the right of suffrage and improved the existing basis of representation in the State legislature, besides defining more carefully the limits of judicial power. The governor's term of office was extended, but his choice left, as before, with the legislature. This constitution was ratified by the people in April following by upwards of 10,000 majority. The instrument was, however, the fruit of compromise, and on the whole disappointed the earnest promoters of the present convention movement, who had hoped to procure a white or popular basis in the House of Delegates, and a more thorough reform of the unequal borough or district system. The real contest had been between the inhabitants of the eastern and western counties, sections jealous of one another. The latter wished for roads and canals, and to be placed in a line with northern enterprise. But the former, located on the tide-water or the neighborhood of navigable rivers closely connecting with the ocean, took but little interest in projects of artificial improvement, and being at the same time taxed for their slaves they paid much the larger part of the revenue. To impose the greatest burdens where

1829. Oct. 5.

1830. Jan. 15.

April.

* See Clay's Private Correspondence.

the greatest share of power was held involved, under the circumstances, a practical difficulty. As for throwing off the incubus of slavery which the philanthropist had prayed for, Virginia was unequal to the sacrifice; and that fact alone rendered a model constitution impossible. Lafayette, who loved the Old Dominion for her traditions, appreciated the influences which dragged the State downward. "Oh! how proud and elated I would feel," he wrote to Monroe in advance, "if something could be contrived in your convention whereby Virginia, who was the first to petition against the slave trade and afterwards forbid it, who has published the first declaration of rights, would take an exalted situation among the promoters of measures tending first to meliorate, then gradually to abolish the slave mode of labor." *

Had Virginia followed this generous advice, and by a last prodigious effort thrown off the system which strangled her, the example would have extended. For the powerful impulse now given to improved means of transportation brought a hardy, productive yeomanry into close contact with slavery; and it was questioned in some of the border States which class of laborers should on economic grounds receive the preference. Partly in the hope, as it appears, of inducing the gradual abolition of slavery within State borders, a bill passed the Kentucky House of Representatives for calling a convention, but it was lost in the Senate by a bare majority.† All the new-born enthusiasm for developing inland traffic and intercourse did not avail to make a slave State free.

1829. Dec. 7. 1830. May 31.

The twenty-first Congress assembled in its first session on the 7th of December. Such was manifestly the strength of the new administration in the House that Andrew Stevenson was re-elected Speaker on the first ballot, receiving 152 votes out of 191.

* See letter of June 17, 1829, Monroe MSS.; also 28 Niles's Register.

† 27 Niles's Register.

Jackson's first annual message, which was sent in on the second day of the session, was eagerly read, as such documents had always been; and the more so because the language of his inaugural address had been so vague. It was a long and able paper, with here and there a striking phrase in the Jacksonian vein; as where, under the head of foreign relations, the settled purpose was stated "to ask nothing that is not clearly right, and to submit to nothing that is wrong." A cordial allusion to Great Britain foreshadowed some new concession in that quarter. An amendment of the constitution was suggested for Presidential elections which would dispense in the future with all intermediate agencies, such as the electoral college or the House, and give the choice to the people; preserving to each State its present relative weight in the election, and in case of a failure, requiring a second choice between the two highest candidates; and it was further proposed to limit the service of each chief magistrate to a single term of four or six years. A lame defence was made of the principle upon which the sweeping removals from office had been made.

Upon the question of the tariff the message still gave a hollow and uncertain sound. The conflicting interests of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures should be harmonized and local feelings merged in a patriotic wish to promote the great interests of the whole. All attempts to connect these subjects with the party conflicts of the day were necessarily injurious, and should be discountenanced. The late tariff, at all events, had not produced the ill effect anticipated on the revenue. The time was near at hand when the public debt would be discharged, and some reductions would be felt as a common benefit, those first of all upon articles like tea and coffee, which could not compete with our own productions; but all changes of this kind should be gradual and certain. These were expressions from which either protectionist or free-trader might draw comfort, but conciliation inspired them. The tone of the message at all events gave no support to the theory that the tariff was unconstitutional; and, as agitation on

the subject was postponed to another Congress, nothing more needed to be said. Upon internal improvements Jackson was better prepared for an immediate issue. The prospect of an early extinction of the public debt served once more for a standpoint. It would soon be time to dispose of a surplus revenue, and his plan proposed a distribution of these surpluses among the States in preference to other modes of money assistance to local enterprises. Yet the matter was stated fairly, as though to invite the public judgment, and under any aspect constitutional powers should not be laxly construed.

Two paragraphs near the close of this message produced a livelier sensation in the country than any other part of it. They related to the Bank of the United States, whose charter would expire in 1836, a date well beyond the bounds of the present executive term. Calling in question both the constitutionality and expediency of the law which created this bank, the President claimed that it had failed in the great end of establishing a uniform and sound currency. Might not, therefore, a national bank founded upon the credit of the government and its revenues be devised in its place? Such was the tenor of the message on this subject. The gauntlet thrown into the ring so early and so suddenly surprised the whole country; and why it was thrown we now proceed to inquire, for Jackson had not done so without meaning to make his challenge good.

1829. In 1829 the Bank of the United States stood, to all appearances, as firmly as a rock imbedded in the ocean, and the financial operations of the country clambered all over it. Its assets on the 1st day of December were $100,668,367; its outstanding liabilities (inclusive of a capital stock of nearly $35,000,000), $100,663,367; its deposits, $13,574,461, of which amount $6,512,813 belonged to the United States Treasury, not to mention some $800,000 besides, which the bank held in the name of various public officers. Its discounts exceeded $40,000,000; its issued

notes were nearly $27,600,000.* Its notes circulated like gold through the United States, and no more stable and uniform currency had ever been known. Since the bank had repaired its losses its dividend averaged six to seven per cent. a year. Its stock stood in the market at 125. At the head of the institution was Nicholas Biddle, whose services in rescuing it from ruin had earned him this distinction. Besides the parent bank at Philadelphia, near Independence Hall, quartered in its marble Parthenon, were twenty-five branches in the various States, each organized with its own president, cashier, and board of directors, and embracing men of the highest standing in the community. Some five hundred men in all were borne upon its pay-rolls. A colossal institution was this for the times, wielding an immense power for good or evil. Its directors claimed never to have oppressed any of the State banks, and yet admitted their ability to destroy or save those banks, as policy might dictate.

There is no reason for supposing that Jackson entered the Presidency with any positive opinion upon the merits of this institution, and far less with the resolve to demolish it. He had once, it is true, come in collision with the New Orleans branch of the bank,† and had long shared, most probably, in that jealous dislike of the money power, so called, which comes so natural to planters and the democracy. But he was President two full months, so the record indicates, before he gave the bank a serious thought; ‡ and, as usual, a hasty spark, kindling his anger, first brought into play that iron resolution which compelled or crushed with remorseless energy. For as Jackson came into office intending to serve but one term, and his illness was so critical all through the summer and fall of 1829, accom-

* Annual Report of Bank, Dec. 1, 1829; 37 Niles's Register.

† *Supra*, p. 241.

‡ 3 Parton's Jackson. Mr. Parton comments upon the groundless tale that Jackson came from Tennessee to Washington resolved on the destruction of the Bank of the United States, and was dissuaded from alluding to the subject in his inaugural address.

panied by alarming symptoms of dropsy, that he and his friends felt it doubtful whether he would live that term through, the question of re-chartering the bank would naturally have interested him but little. Among his political supporters, those of Pennsylvania in particular, many were bank men; the outcry of 1819 had long since died away with the causes that produced it. The institution itself was sound and admirably managed; usage gave it stability; and the present prosperity of the Union, the monetary ease, and the high condition of public and private credit were so blended with confidence in its operations that no one had devised or even dreamed of a substitute.

The first intercourse, too, between the United States Bank and the new administration was courteous. Over $8,000,000 of the public debt had to be paid off on the first of July; and the "judicious arrangements" made by the bank officers, so as to make the funds of the Treas-
1829. June–July. ury available at different points for that purpose without producing a stringency in the money market, were repeatedly acknowledged by Secretary Ingham in his letters of this date to Biddle, and finally by the Pres-
December. ident in the self-same message from which we have just quoted.

The storm first gathered in a distant quarter, and the public knew nothing of it until 1832. Levi Woodbury, a Senator from New Hampshire, wrote in June to Secretary Ingham of the Treasury, making confidential strictures upon Jeremiah Mason, the president of the Portsmouth branch, as a man of brusque manners and favoritism, of whom business men in the place made much complaint; adding that Webster, as Mason's particular friend, was supposed to have had much to do with procuring his appointment. The Secretary enclosed this letter to President Biddle,
July. expressing the hope that political relationship would have no influence upon the granting or withholding of bank facilities. Other complaints of the same character reaching the parent bank, Biddle undertook to investigate

the whole matter. In the mean time, Isaac Hill of New Hampshire, the new comptroller, had prevailed upon the Secretary of War to order the pension agency, with its deposit, removed from this Portsmouth branch to Concord for the advantage of a private bank there; an order which Mason opposed very stubbornly, and for the time succeeded in thwarting.

This affair needed the most delicate touch conceivable where an administration so inflammable as Jackson's was to be kept in good humor. Unfortunately for the welfare of the vast interests confided to him, Biddle had a facile pen, owning, in fact, his first appointment as government director to the grace with which he could draw off a report or make of statistics agreeable reading. Moreover, he felt too positive that the bank was impregnable. Defending his institution warmly against every imputation of political favoritism, he was drawn into some indiscreet expressions which the Secretary was not slow to criticise; and at length, after visiting Portsmouth, he not only satisfied himself and the directors that the charges made at Washington were entirely groundless, but announced to Ingham the immediate re-election of Mason in a frank but highly impolitic letter, which in effect defied the politicians and administration. "I deem it my duty," says Biddle in the epistle which thus embroiled the bank with the government, "to state to you, in a manner perfectly respectful to your official and personal character, yet so clear as to leave no possibility of misconception, that the board of directors of the Bank of the United States and the boards of directors of the branches of the Bank of the United States acknowledge not the slightest responsibility of any description whatsoever to the Secretary of the Treasury touching the political opinions and conduct of their officers." The bank, he argued, is responsible to Congress only, and is carefully shielded by its charter from Executive control. And expressing the reluctance with which the board of directors felt constrained to make this declaration known, he deemed it, he said, most becoming both to the board and

Sept. 15.

to the Executive to state with perfect frankness their opinion of any interference in the concerns of the institution confided to their care.

A long reply followed from Secretary Ingham, expressed in smooth and courteous terms, but inspired with covert malice and hostility. Fully reciprocating the wish expressed by his correspondent that the bank should stand absolutely independent of party, he pointed out at the same time that the Executive had certain rights in the premises which he, as Secretary, should never surrender. The law gave the administration power to act upon the bank in various ways: as, for instance, in the appointment or removal of five of the directors, in the withdrawal of the public deposits, in the exaction of weekly statements, and in the inspection of its general accounts. Should it ever appear to the satisfaction of the Secretary of the Treasury that the Bank of the United States was unjust and oppressive, he would be faithless to his trust if he hesitated to lessen its capacity for injury by removing from its vaults the public deposits. Biddle's reply, which closed this correspondence, showed that he felt he had overshot his mark and hit a tiger. He receded gracefully, maintaining only that the bank ought to keep out of politics, and inclined to treat the whole discussion as a good-natured argument.* The bank had won its victory, but at how dear a cost the sequel will show.

October.

Oct. 9.

Jackson's hand is concealed in this whole controversy; but what the effect Biddle's September letter must have produced upon him it is not hard to surmise. We see him bristling up at once, and swearing "By the Eternal!" (his favorite expletive) that he would take the strut out of this Biddle, and show him whether the Executive had not an arm long and strong enough to shiver his bank into splinters. Ingham had argued that the bank could not keep out of politics, and hence that its officers ought to be

* 3 Parton's Jackson; Sumner's Jackson; Public Documents, 1832.

taken from both parties; and this, probably, was Jackson's own view. But the President's mind appears further to have been poisoned by others in his confidence, who had long hated the institution on their own account,—by Hill, for instance, who brought the local bank jealousy to bear, and by Amos Kendall, one of the newly appointed auditors of the Treasury, who came from Kentucky with a story that the branch bank there had spent money in interfering with the elections. The President's mind was readily inflamed by those of intense feeling, but no such feeling did Secretary Ingham cherish against the bank.* A private letter from Kendall to the *Courier and Enquirer*, Jackson's organ in New York, gave a hint, about a week before Congress met, that the President's message would come out against the bank, and felt the way towards transferring the public deposits to local banks and arousing a popular movement against the national monopoly. The response did not come quickly. Nor was the President's message against the re-charter favorably received, though it spread a suspicion that some mismanagement had been discovered, and created a monetary alarm that soon subsided when the bank's annual statement appeared. The discussion of re-charter was thought premature, the constitutional doubt impertinent, and the substitute of a political bank suggested a worse engine of jobbery and abuse than the present institution could possibly be. Jackson's own party was not yet prepared to take the same bold stand against the bank as himself. Whenever the subject came up during the session the sentiment of Congress was plainly shown in favor of leaving the national bank alone.

President Biddle was advised to present the petition for

* See Ingham's address, published in 1832, after he left the cabinet; 42 Niles's Register. He says that he found, to his surprise, soon after he entered Jackson's cabinet, that the President and those nearest in his confidence felt animosity against the bank. Allegations of political interference were made, but he could not trace the stories down to anything tangible, except for a letter by Amos Kendall, which quoted authority that failed to come up to the proof. And see Sumner's Jackson.

a re-charter of his institution in the closing session of this Congress. He declined to do so, and yet believed that if the bill for a new charter should pass both branches the President would not withhold his approval.* Jackson, nothing daunted by his first failure, returned to the charge, sounding in his second annual message a louder warning than before. Congress was still unconvinced; but the President found this time a champion in the Senate. For Benton, once the bitterest of personal foes, but since reconciled, now became the conspicuous defender of Jackson's policy in the forum of our Capitol. His manner was earnest and confident, his style direct and pungent, and he poured a flood of ancient and modern illustration upon his subject, which he could apply or misapply as suited his argument. His skill was great in bringing out the strong points of his side, and so arranging his matter as to produce the best popular effect. His vigorous personality and self-conceit aided the impression of his oratory, which was positive, real, and withal thoroughly partisan. Upon the lengthening issues which were soon to grow out of the effort to divorce government and bank he laid the best foundations of his renown in Congress, and acquired the title of "Old Bullion." Moving in perfect harmony with the President on this subject, he now took the floor and delivered a speech against the national bank full of points, and conceived for the purpose of awakening the interest of the people, the millions. The moment he sat down Webster called for a vote on Benton's motion, which was to the effect that the charter ought not to be renewed, and it was voted down. The Senate still stood by the bank, regardless of the menace of the President's message; the debate stopped with Benton's speech. In both Houses of the twenty-first Congress the friends of the bank prevailed. But Benton's speech was read outside of Congress, and at last a ground swell set in which slowly shifted the Jackson Democracy into the position Jackson desired.†

1830. Dec.

* Clay's Private Correspondence.

† See Annals of Congress; 1 Benton's Thirty Years.

All the time Congress was in session the new President watched its proceedings with the keen eye of a lynx. His friend Major Lewis, now an auditor, or Donelson, his nephew and private secretary, kept him well informed each day of the proceedings. Not a speech nor a speaker of prominence escaped him. Jackson's attitude towards Congress was a singular one, such as no other President of the United States ever successfully maintained. He did not flatter the legislature and at the same time lead it gently in the direction desired; still less did he wait patiently for its free will to be manifested. As its course pleased or displeased him he would show anger, defiance, delight, but passive he could not be. Yet he gained great influence over it; and this was by always holding before Congress and himself the idea that he stood with the people behind him, determined to fulfil the people's wishes, and to punish in their name whoever dared oppose their will. This may be thought autocracy under a delusion, and autocracy it certainly proved in practice. But acting still as agent of the people, Jackson knew how to succeed in spite of Congress, and his popularity was quite as often increased by making a sturdy stand against that body as by conciliating its good will. Its opinion was nothing as against his own. In the greatest achievements of his administration he carried his own point by a veto against majorities in both Houses, or assumed an executive responsibility fearlessly and despotically without first seeking the sanction of that body, and indeed as though he had fully resolved to accomplish the end in view by stealing a march on the legislature before there was opportunity to tie his hands by a statute. "Speak out to the people, sir, and tell them that instead of supporting me and my measures Congress is engaged in President-making." Such was the direction he gave to the editor of his official organ when the Senate and House took the critical attitude; and he always felt confident that the people would take his part and put these things to rights.

The Senate proceedings in the present Congress first

aroused the President's anger. Senators, on gathering for the long session, gazed with genuine dismay at the list of removals and new appointments submitted for their confirmation. It was useless, perhaps, to call now in question the discretionary power to remove, which law and the uniform practice of forty years had vested in the President, though some eminent Senators were inclined to set up that the President had only the power to suspend from office subject to the approval or disapproval of the confirming branch. But the list of new appointments furnished matter ample for present discussion. Certainly no list so lengthy and with so many mean and even infamous characters had ever before been presented by an American Executive. The preferment, too, of so many press writers was thought a dangerous precedent. Executive sessions therefore, this winter, though secret, were long and exciting. Action upon some of the more objectionable nominations was put off for months. Jackson was induced to withdraw of his own accord a few of the most obnoxious names. Several of those which remained and upon which he had most strongly set his heart, those of men who had become his intimate friends, were rejected by Senators of his own party. Isaac Hill of New Hampshire, the publisher of the most scandalous tale circulated against the late President, was rejected. Amos Kendall was confirmed only by the casting vote of the Vice-President. Possibly the influence used by these two editors against the bank had injured them. But the list was in general confirmed, good and bad appointments together; for Jackson's irresistible popularity was an argument too strong for many who in heart disapproved of his abuse of the patronage. Nor would Jackson suffer his friends to be thrust aside without taking his own revenge. The rejection of Hill was held up to the New Hampshire Democracy as an insult. It was soon arranged that Levi Woodbury should vacate his place in the Senate, the President proposing another field of service for him. Hill was chosen his successor, and came

1829–30.

back to Washington in 1831, to sit as a peer among those who had deprived him of his office.*

The vicious character of so many of Jackson's first appointments to office one should ascribe chiefly to haste, his political ignorance, and the peculiar instinct which guided his selection. He was honest and upright in the general endeavor to give to his countrymen a high and noble administration, and in most points of general policy he showed a rare sense in dealing with men and events, such as his enemies could not easily appreciate.

The Indian question in its relation to the southwestern States was one of the first Jackson had to deal with. In Maine, New York, and other northern States, where Indian remnants were still to be found, the people of the State took jurisdiction over Indians within their borders, as a matter of course; but Georgia and Alabama had been restrained from doing so; and there, as we have seen, great bodies of Indians maintained their distinct sovereignties. As Indians they claimed the protection of the national government, and denied the right of any State to interfere with them or invade their domains. It was true that the constitution vested in Congress the power to regulate commerce with Indian tribes; but, on the other hand, no State was to be erected within the jurisdiction of another State without its consent. The Cherokees of Georgia, refusing to sell their lands and remove, claimed to set up a sovereignty of their own; a sort of oligarchy under their half-breed leaders. They numbered in 1825 about 15,000, inclusive of resident whites and slaves. Their rapid increase in civilization made it likely they would remain permanent bodies, and many philanthro-

* Isaac Hill was educated in a printing-office. He bought and began to edit the Concord (New Hampshire) Patriot in 1810, and his paper was very influential in converting New Hampshire to the Democracy. Though Adams carried the State in 1828, Jackson's vote was a very large one, and by 1832 Jackson received its electoral vote to aid his re-election. Hill was insignificant in personal appearance, but he very quickly won Jackson's friendship, and, together with Kendall, influenced him strongly against the United States Bank.

pists interested in their experiment were ready to lend a moral support to maintain them in their rights. Georgia viewed the subject from a standpoint of her own, and a natural one. Soon after Jackson's election a law was passed extending the jurisdiction of the State over the Cherokee lands and dividing them into counties. In Alabama and Mississippi, where similar difficulties were to be met, a like course was taken by the local legislature.

The Indians called upon the United States for protection against these State laws, and the distant friends of humanity were stirred on their behalf. The question was full of difficulty; but Jackson had dealt with the southwestern Indians, and he sympathized with the States whose citizens sought to exercise the usual sovereignty enjoyed by fellow-members of the Union. As a man of common sense, he refused to array the armies of the United States on any false issue of philanthropy. He refused to countenance the attempt of the Indian tribes to establish an independent government in these States, and advised them either to emigrate beyond the Mississippi or submit to the laws extended over them.*

The discontented Cherokees and their friends determined to invoke the aid of the national judiciary. A Cherokee Indian, Tassel by name, was prosecuted for the murder of another Indian before the local courts of Georgia. He was tried by a jury of white men, convicted, and sentenced to death. The case was carried on appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States, that the whole question of independent sovereignties might be tested. Chief Justice Marshall cited the State of Georgia to appear and show cause why the sentence against Tassel should not be corrected. Governor Gilmer laid this mandate before the legislature of Georgia, which ordered him to disregard it, and resist any attempt to interfere with the criminal law of that State. Tassel was

1830.

December.

* See annual message, December, 1829.

hanged on the day fixed for his execution, the 28th of December, and the citation was not heard of again. The Cherokees applied once more to the Supreme Court of the United States to enjoin the State of Georgia from interfering with their treaty rights. The court, in effect, sustained the claim of the Cherokee nation as just under the constitution, but declared itself powerless to afford relief.* In point of fact, the remedy lay with the President, and he had refused to apply it. But how long could peace endure in this Union with an Indian community propped up to resist the jurisdiction of the State in which it resided? If the two races could bear one another's presence at all, it was in the strict line of civilization to incorporate the Indians with the white citizens of the State, and thus bring them forward to a plane of cooperation and equality. This could not be done; and hence the part of humanity was to persuade the Indians to remove. This policy Jackson now urged, as his predecessors had done, that a separate Indian territory might be set apart for them west of the Mississippi and outside the limits of any State or Territory then formed.† 1831.

Upon the question of internal improvements, Jackson saw from the drift of legislation at the first session of this Congress that his party friends were not disposed to act in concert nor to regard his wishes. He applied, therefore, his own corrective. Several bills appropriating for new roads were pending in the two Houses, with fair majorities in favor of their passage. That which first reached him was the Maysville and Lexington turnpike bill.‡ He returned it, with his disapproval, to the House of Representatives, where it originated, and, failing to receive the needful two-thirds, the bill was lost. Of four other bills which passed

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* 5 Peters, I.

† Message, December, 1829. And see Niles's Register; Sumner's Jackson. Act May 28, 1830, appropriated $500,000 to aid in the removal of the Indians, as proposed by the President.

‡ This road was to have run through the strongest Jackson district in Kentucky. 1 Webster Correspondence.

just before the session closed, he signed one with the understanding that it should receive a particular construction. The second, which appropriated for a road from Washington to Frederick, he returned to the Senate with his objections, and the bill was lost; and the other two, one of which was designed for continuing the Cumberland Road, he defeated by retaining them until after the adjournment. This was the beginning of Jackson's exercise of the veto power. Presidents Madison and Monroe had each vetoed a bill for internal improvements, but it was something astonishing for an Executive to arrest so many enactments of this kind at a single session.

Jackson thus put the ban upon log-rolling legislation more firmly and with better logical consistency than Monroe had done, for his constitutional objection embraced public subscription to works of such character, as well as originating and constructing them. He would not spend public money in building canals and roads on the public responsibility, nor would he invest it in pet local enterprises of which private speculators had the control. The general ground of prohibition, as he stated it, was that internal improvements at the national cost should wait until the national debt was paid, and the constitution amended, besides, so as to sanction such a right. But Jackson's objection lay deeper. Special legislation and jobbery of all kinds he detested. The abuses to which such appropriation would lead, exceeded far, as he clearly saw, the good they were capable of promoting. While the distinction attempted between works of a local and those of a national character was always a vague and shadowy one at best, politicians and speculators had of late become more and more involved in one another's schemes, and there was constant danger that by the artful expedients of capitalists the losses of their own unsuccessful enterprises would be shifted eventually upon the government. Even in the matter of surveys it had come to such a pass that a State, a town, or a private company, with a road or canal to construct, pushed to have the work laid out at the cost of the United States, and

thus save a minor item of expense. Gratitude for national assistance was not properly bestowed. It was shown, not to the Union which assumed the local burden, but to the men whose influence carried the needful measure through Congress, and who usually expected political favors in return. The growing evils attending this barter of influence, which surely fostered corruption, Jackson courageously used the vast power of his office to suppress.

Upon the tariff little progress was made in this twenty-first Congress. A bill reported in the House by McDuffie proposed reducing all taxes on woollens, cottons, iron, hemp, flax, molasses, and indigo to what they were before the tariff act of 1824. The bill was laid aside; but in accordance with the spirit of the message, the present taxes on coffee, cocoa, tea, and other necessaries were reduced. Jackson was guarded on the general subject of the tariff, but urged Congress to deal with it in a spirit of conciliation. The real contest awaited a nearer approach to the Presidential election.*

Angrily as the friends of internal improvement protested against the President's repeated control of majorities by his veto, the policy he pursued was on the whole a popular one, and well calculated to allay the existing discontent at the south. But South Carolina nullification was now coming in sight, and a celebrated debate which belongs to the first session exposed its claims and its fallacies to the country. When South Carolina had put forward her "exposition and protest," she looked for rescue to Andrew Jackson. His accession to office checked for a time all excitement upon the tariff question, and he came in under circumstances which might well have imposed the prudence he practised; for the South had voted for him as partial to southern interests, while New York, Pennsylvania, and the West looked upon him as a friend of the tariff. But Calhoun and the South Caro-

* Annals of Congress; Sumner's Jackson; Message of 1829; Act May 20, 1830.

lina leaders had not for a moment laid aside their scheme of resistance to the obnoxious act of 1828,—the "tariff of abominations," as it was called,—and they prepared to bring nullification forward at an early opportunity in a more imposing manner than had ever before been attempted. They meant to test thus the strength of their cause before Congress and the new administration; and so infatuated was the great dogmatist for the moment that he imagined it in his power to draw Jackson himself into the meshes of his finely-woven net of State sovereignty. The arena selected for a first impression was the Senate, where the chief himself presided and guided the onset with his eye. Hayne, South Carolina's foremost Senator, was the chosen champion; and the cause of his State, both in its right and wrong side, could have found no abler exponent while Calhoun's official station kept him from the floor. It has been said that Hayne was Calhoun's sword and buckler, and that he returned to the contest refreshed each morning by nightly communions with the Vice-President, drawing auxiliary supplies from the well-stored arsenal of that powerful and subtle mind.* Be this as it may, Hayne was a ready and copious orator, a highly educated lawyer, a man of varied accomplishments, shining as writer, speaker, and counsellor, equally qualified to draw up a bill or to advocate it, quick to discern, and, though brilliant, disposed to view things on the practical side. His person was flexible, about the medium height and well proportioned; his face pleasant and expressive, and, though serious, lighting up readily with a smile; his manners irresistibly cordial and easy, winning strangers at first sight. He turned readily from business to society, and pursued with equal zest the triumphs of the forum and ball room. A graceful adaptiveness at all points to a life of distinction was his striking quality; rugged inequalities in his nature there were none. Gifted for a life of public eminence, nobly born, bearing a Revolutionary name pathetic in its memories, well fortified by

* 2 Benton's Thirty Years.

wealth and marriage connections, dignified, never vulgar nor unmindful of the feelings of those with whom he mingled, Hayne moved in an atmosphere where lofty and chivalrous honor was the ruling sentiment. But it was the honor of a caste; and the struggling bread-winners of society, the great commonalty, he little studied or understood. This was the man to fire an aristocracy of fellow-citizens ready to arm when their interests were in danger, and upon him it devolved to advance the cause of South Carolina, break down the tariff, and fascinate the Union with the new rattlesnake theories.

The great debate, which culminated in Hayne's encounter with Webster, came about in a somewhat casual way. Senator Foote of Connecticut had submitted a proposition inquiring into the expediency of limiting the sales of public lands to those already in the market. This seemed like an eastern spasm of jealousy at the progress of the west. Benton was rising in renown as the advocate not only of western settlers but of a new theory that the public lands should be given away instead of sold to them. He joined Hayne in using this opportunity to try to detach the West from the East, and restore the old co-operation of the West and the South against New England. The discussion took a wide range, going back to topics that had agitated the country before the constitution was formed. It was of a partisan and censorious character, and drew out nearly all the chief members of the Senate. But the topic which became the leading feature of the whole debate and gave it an undying interest was that of nullification, in which Hayne and Webster came forth as the chief antagonists. Webster had seen the angry drift of this discussion, and felt that it rested upon himself to uphold the cause of the Union, and of his own State besides, from the menaces and reproaches which the southerner hurled so recklessly. He believed that men were already plotting to break up the Union, and that the people must be aroused to vigilance. In politics, at the same time, his position was independent. His alliance with Adams had

not been so close that the sense of defeat should make him either crestfallen or rancorous. Towards new parties his course was uncommitted; he tended to Clay, but he was no man's man, though a true son of New England, and to the fibre of his soul an American. Hayne launched his confident javelin at the New England States. He accused them of a desire to check the growth of the west in the interests of protection. Webster replied to his speech the next day, and left not a shred of the charge, baseless as it was. Inflamed and mortified at this repulse, Hayne soon returned to the assault, primed with a two days' speech, which at great length vaunted the patriotism of South Carolina and bitterly attacked New England, dwelling particularly upon her conduct during the late war. It was a speech delivered before a crowded auditory, and loud were the southern exultations that he was more than a match for Webster. Strange was it, however, that in heaping reproaches upon the Hartford Convention he did not mark how nearly its leaders had mapped out the same line of opposition to the national government that his State now proposed to take, both relying upon the arguments of the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798–99.

1830. Jan. 19–25.

Webster rose the next day in his seat to make his reply. He had allowed himself but a single night from eve to morn to prepare for a critical and crowning occasion.* But his reply was gathered from the choicest arguments and the richest thoughts that had long floated through his brain while this crisis was gathering; and bringing these materials together in lucid and compact shape, he calmly composed and delivered before another crowded and breathless auditory a speech full of burning

Jan. 26.

* Webster's pigeon-holes served him to good purpose in preparing this masterly oration; for the habit of gathering materials and composing passages for future use was characteristic of him. Indolent as he often appeared, and magnificent as were his endowments, he was not one of those who trust to the inspiration of the moment. "There is no such thing as extemporaneous acquisition," was one of his felicitous sayings.

passages, which will live as long as the American Union, and the grandest effort of his life. Two leading ideas predominated in this reply, and with respect to either Hayne was not only answered but put to silence. First, New England was vindicated. As a pious son of Federalism, Webster went the full length of the required defence. Some of his historical deductions may be questioned; but far above all possible error on the part of her leaders, stood colonial and Revolutionary New England, and the sturdy, intelligent, and thriving people whose loyalty to the Union had never failed, and whose home, should ill befall the nation, would yet prove liberty's last shelter. Next, the Union was held up to view in all its strength, symmetry, and integrity, reposing in the ark of the constitution; no longer an experiment, as in the days when Hamilton and Jefferson contended for shaping its course, but ordained and established by and for the people, to secure the blessings of liberty to all posterity. It was not a Union to be torn up without bloodshed; for nerves and arteries were interwoven with its roots and tendrils, sustaining the lives and interests of twelve millions of inhabitants. No hanging over the abyss of disunion, no weighing of the chances, no doubting as to what the constitution was worth, no placing of liberty before Union, but "liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable." This was the tenor of Webster's speech, and nobly did the country respond to it. There was no apprehension of an irrepressible conflict between slavery and freedom; but the liberty was that liberty which permitted of holding men in bondage, and the Union that product of the constitution which held in alliance the ambitions of States with their several slave and free systems of society. Thirty years later, when South Carolina forced the experiment now broached in debate, Webster's immortal sentiment, though he was then in the grave, first brought the loyal part of the people to their feet, and the South soon learned that peaceable secession was the wildest of delusions; then the graver lesson was added that by once withdrawing his peculiar institu-

tions from the protection of the constitution, their shield hitherto against the condemnation of mankind, the slaveholder had exposed them to certain ruin.

The new heresy of nullification was in this debate stated on the one side and refuted on the other. What Hayne and the incessant thinker from whom he drew his inspiration preferred for popularity's sake to call the States' right doctrine, was as declared that "in case of a plain, palpable violation of the constitution, a State may interpose" and arrest or nullify the law within her own borders for her own protection; a statement of itself too cautious to justify its practical application to any such case as that of the tariff, where, if any infraction could be claimed at all, it consisted merely in raising duties, properly laid, to an excessive rate. Against such a doctrine Webster showed that this government was the independent offspring of the popular will, not the creature of State legislatures, nor obliged to act through State agency; in other words, a national government, possessing within itself all the powers necessary to enforce its own laws and for its own preservation; and that no State nor combination of States has the power to arrest or prevent the execution of a law of the United States.

Some of Webster's personal friends had felt nervous over what appeared to them too hasty a period for preparation. But his cool, unperturbed manner reassured them in an instant.* He entered the Senate on that memorable day

* In Harvey's Reminiscences, it is related that Everett called upon Webster with trepidation, immediately after the adjournment, on the completion of Hayne's masterly effort, having heard that Webster would reply the next morning, and fearing that he was not quite aware of the magnitude of the contest. "Did you take notes," he asked, "of Hayne's speech?" Webster took from his vest pocket a piece of paper about as big as the palm of his hand, and replied, "I have it all; that is his speech." Everett immediately rose and excused himself, feeling restored to confidence by Webster's own calmness. Sargent, in his Public Men, tells a corresponding anecdote of Senator Clayton, who felt anxious that Hayne should be well answered. He left his seat so as to meet Webster, as if by accident, when the latter entered the Senate chamber the next day. "Are you well charged?" he asked in a very low tone. "Seven

with slow and stately step, and took his seat as though unconscious of the loud buzz of expectant interest with which the crowded auditory greeted his appearance. He was dressed with scrupulous care, in a blue coat with metal buttons, a buff vest rounding over his full abdomen, and his neck encircled with a white cravat. He rose, the image of conscious mastery, after the dull preliminary business of the day was dispatched, and with a happy figurative allusion to the tossed mariner, as he called for a reading of the resolution from which the debate had so far drifted, lifted his audience at once to his level. Then he began his speech, his words flowing on so completely at command that a fellow Senator who heard him has likened his elocution to the steady flow of molten gold. There was an end of all apprehension. Eloquence threw open the portals of eternal day. New England, the Union, the constitution in its integrity, all were triumphantly vindicated; and the excited crowd which had packed the Senate chamber, filling every seat on the floor and in the galleries, and all the available standing room, dispersed after the orator's last grand apostrophe had died away on the air, with national pride throbbing at the heart. Massachusetts men, gloomy and downcast of late, now walked the avenue as though the fife and drum were before them. Hayne's few but zealous partisans shielded him still, and South Carolina spoke with pride of him. His speech was indeed a powerful one from its eloquence and personalities. But his standpoint was purely local and sectional. The people read Webster's speech and marked him for the champion henceforth against all assaults upon the constitution. An undefinable dread now went abroad that men were planning against the peace of the nation, that the Union was in danger; and citizens looked more closely after its safety and welfare. Webster's speech aroused the latent spirit of patriotism. Even Benton, whose connection with the de-

fingers," was the reply, in a similar tone; and each passed to his seat. The allusion of "seven fingers" was one that sportsmen understood; four fingers signifying a full charge.

bate made him at first belittle these grand utterances, soon felt the danger and repudiated the company of the nullifiers. He remained through his long public career a southern Unionist, and a good type of the growing class of statesmen heedful of slave interests who loved the Union as it was and adored its compromises.*

An effort was made in another direction by the nullifiers to give popularity to their cause. This time the President was to be drawn over to the new doctrines as a friend of the South and of Calhoun, and induced to lend his powerful support to the anti-tariff policy in all its length. Jefferson's birthday, April 13th, was accordingly celebrated by a public dinner given at Washington City. The ostensible purpose was to honor the memory of Jefferson, the real one to exhibit him as actual founder of the political State rights school to which the subscribers belonged. Among the invited guests present were the President and Vice-President of the United States, besides several members of the cabinet. Some members of the Pennsylvania delegation, admirers of Jefferson, withdrew when they saw what toasts had been prepared, refusing to take part at a nullification banquet, but the company was still a large and ardent one. When the regular toasts were over the President was called upon for a volunteer, and gave it with emphasis: "Our Federal Union, it must be preserved." This brief but thrilling announcement spread dismay over the faces of the nullifiers, while the rest of the company rejoiced at the rebuke it imported. Calhoun followed with an effort to restore the former pitch of the festival. "The Union" was the sentiment he offered, "next to our Liberty the most dear; may we all remember that it can only be preserved by respecting the rights of the States, and distributing equally the benefit and burden of the Union." But the ghost of Banquo had been seen, and the company broke up in mutual suspicion and dissension. Jackson's toast, which

* Benton's Thirty Years, *passim*, which exhibits constantly this cast of mind.

was not an impromptu one, but carefully prepared, made comment far and wide, and following so soon upon Webster's great speech, was received by the public as he meant it,—to announce to the people that there was a plot against the Union which must be watched, and to show Calhoun and the nullifiers by a well-dealt blow that the President of the United States would make short work of traitors, regardless of their new philosophy.*

These new expounders of nullification adopted for a basis the celebrated Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798–99, whose first drafts came from the hands of Madison and Jefferson respectively. The exceptional reasons which called forth those resolutions in the experimental age of the Union, and the political object intended, we have already stated.† More stress was now laid upon them, in truth, than they had ever deserved. A theory was contrived for breaking down the alien and sedition laws, which threatened the liberties of minorities in the whole land, and were palpable infractions of State and popular rights, whose injurious operation was by no means confined to Virginia and Kentucky alone. Those acts were stamped out in the usual course of legislation, and these resolutions having done their part to work public sentiment to that result, the movement ended. Jefferson and Madison never pushed the engine farther, never worked out the philosophy of State resistance, never experimented with so dangerous a dogma. Speedily elevated to the Presidency, Jefferson conducted his whole administration upon the theory of national supremacy, and Madison followed in the same line. When eastern malcontents took up the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions, to forge a weapon of resistance on the State right theory, these Presidents gave the creed of disloyal resistance no countenance. And so it continued for the rest of their lives. Now that nullification was taken up in 1828, Madison was very earnest in

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* See 3 Parton's Jackson; 1 Benton's Thirty Years.

† See *supra*, vol. i, p. 424.

repelling the idea that nullification in the South Carolina sense was deducible from either the Virginia or the Kentucky resolutions; and, a pronounced anti-nullifier himself, he was most earnest, moreover, in defending Jefferson's name against all who sought to make it the pedestal for the new colossal heresy.

In view of all the circumstances, Jefferson should not be called the father of nullification. The word "nullification" was contained, to be sure, in his draft of the Kentucky resolutions, and he invented the dogma which Calhoun afterwards expanded into a system of political philosophy. But this invention was for a special purpose, a political demonstration, and he quickly abandoned it, never developing the idea, never applying it to new exigencies. From State rights to nullification is a long stride; from nullification to secession is a stride still longer. To work out the whole scheme and impress it upon a State or community requires long and persistent effort; and in such a work Jefferson never engaged. He threw his invention aside; Calhoun picked it up and applied the idea anew, pushing it boldly to extreme consequences. Jefferson was not father in the sense of founder, therefore, of the South Carolina school with which nullification is historically associated. Political responsibility for events involves, properly speaking, a personal contact with those events, or at least some shaping influence intended to bring them about. Especially should this rule of limitation hold good where to fasten the responsibility upon any one is to affix a stigma to his fame. Jefferson was dead before the tariff measure which gave birth to nullification in South Carolina was passed or even proposed in Congress.

South Carolina nullification, which led in time to rebellion, we shall properly study, then, as a movement of the present date, and as having no just connection with the resolutions of 1798–99, though borrowing thence the germ of that philosophy which Calhoun inculcated as founder of a school of his own. State rights remain, it is true, in a subordinate sense, and for the extremity of revolution, a precious

reliance against national outrage upon inherent rights and a central despotism; but only for such extremity.

A social scandal shook the new administration to its centre, and in the real or fancied wrong of a woman we see a potent effect in shattering to pieces Jackson's first cabinet. Major John H. Eaton, it appears, married shortly before his great chieftain and friend was installed as President, and a strong motive with him for accepting the high trust to which he was called was the wish to see his gay and showy wife taking her place in Washington society as one of its leaders by right of her husband's cabinet position. Unfortunately, Mrs. Eaton was too well known at the capital to make a wish so natural to the newly-married pair an easy one for fulfilment. Peggy O'Neil was the daughter of a Washington tavern-keeper, with whom Eaton, while a Senator, had boarded for many years, and she had grown up a pert and saucy beauty, free with the lodgers at this second-rate house, and of recent years provoking much gossip by her intimacy with the handsome and jovial major from Tennessee. In course of time she became the wife of one Timberlake, a purser in the United States navy, and the mother of two children, passing most of her time, however, with her parents in Washington, and finding in Eaton a friend who maintained a good-natured interest in both herself and her spouse. Timberlake committed suicide while on service in the Mediterranean, because of a propensity for drink which he could not overcome, and Eaton, with Jackson's approval, married the widow. This was a manly course, and, under most circumstances, would have silenced the tongues of rumor. But Washington society felt scandalized at the thought that Peggy O'Neil, whose antecedents were reputed worse than vulgar, should claim entrance into their highest circle and mingle with the cream of chaste refinement. The President was besought not to appoint Eaton Secretary of War and stir up social trouble; and this proving in vain, the white swans of society took the issue into their own hands. The wife of

the Vice-President led in refusing to recognize Mrs. Eaton; the daughter of Berrien, who was a widower, and the wives of Branch and Ingham followed her example, as did also the ladies of the diplomatic corps and of the high military officers; and even Mrs. Donelson, the mistress of the White House, whose husband was Jackson's nephew and private secretary, sided with Peggy Eaton's enemies. In short, the wife of the Secretary of War was ignored with that sublime unconsciousness which leaders of society well know how to assume.

Mrs. Eaton, who was a brave woman, brought up her male friends to fight for her rights. No one tried to force a way for her with such fiery zeal and knightly gallantry as the old General himself. Mindful of the days when his own wife's honor had been assailed, he made Eaton's cause his own, and took the bride's reputation into his own protection as though she had been his daughter. He wrote long and furious letters to those who brought reports against Mrs. Eaton's chastity. He hunted to cover all the stories that came within reach, and showed the acuteness of a criminal lawyer in confuting each new slander by urging points, weak or strong, against its probability. Two Presbyterian clergymen whom he had respected made statements in the hope of turning him; but they found themselves summoned instead to attend a cabinet meeting, at which the President interrogated, interrupted, and berated them until they marched out indignantly, and all this as a means of convincing his advisers that their ladies had no ground for treating Mrs. Eaton as they had done. Finally, after expostulating with Mrs. Donelson when she refused to visit the cabinet officer's wife, he advised her to go back to the Hermitage. She went, and her husband went with her, resigning his position as private secretary; but in six months the General relented, and they returned from their banishment to share the White House with him again.

Van Buren arrived in Washington soon after this feud commenced, having lingered at Albany long enough to

close up his concerns as governor of New York on resigning that office. To the delight of Jackson and his Tennessee circle, he took sides with Mrs. Eaton; and being a widower without daughters, he occupied a certain advantage over Calhoun and the reluctant secretaries. He called upon Mrs. Eaton, and used his influence with some of the diplomatic corps to arrange parties for her. It chanced that Mr. Vaughan, the British minister, and Baron Krudener, the Russian minister, were both bachelors; and falling good-naturedly into the plans of the Secretary of State, each gave a ball to which Mrs. Eaton was invited. But when "Bellona," as she was called, was led out to a cotillion, it instantly dissolved; the attentions of gentlemen were offset by the silent inattentions of her own sex; and at the Russian minister's ball, Mrs. Huygens, the wife of the Dutch minister, left the supper-room on her husband's arm rather than be seated by Mrs. Eaton's side. Jackson was so angry over this latter feminine affront that he threatened to have the Dutch minister sent home. Van Buren himself issued cards for a ball in Mrs. Eaton's honor. At a grand dinner given at the White House to a select company of ladies and gentlemen, the President took care by his marked attentions to admonish all present that the wife of the Secretary of War was one of his favorites, and that he expected her to be treated as such in all cases.*

All these efforts of widowers and bachelors to give a woman a position among those of her own sex were as fruitless as they always will be. Woman reserves to herself the treatment to be accorded to woman; she holds the keys of society, and upon a question of chastity would refuse to surrender them to St. Peter himself. Jackson, in his truly chivalrous tilt, felt for once the foil of a weapon which he could not turn. Eaton, a man genial and fond of society, was greatly incensed by the incivilities he was forced to encounter in silence. His position in the cabinet became painful in the extreme, and with Ingham,

* See 3 Parton's Jackson.

Branch, and Berrien his intercourse subsided into the coldest civility. To add to his mortification, stories were trumped up against him in connection with the unsettled accounts of the late Timberlake. The President lost all patience as the situation passed from bad to worse. Early in 1830 he determined to dissolve his cabinet unless it could be better harmonized. Barry had given no cause of complaint, for he had supported the Eaton side of the controversy. Richard M. Johnson undertook to be agent of the Chief Executive for conferring with the Secretaries whose ladies were recalcitrant. He approached these individuals and gave them to understand that unless Mrs. Eaton was visited by their families they could not remain in office. Each answered with spirit, refusing to be forced in matters of family intercourse, but at the same time responding not unkindly as to Eaton personally, and of course putting the responsibility for such affronts upon the ladies themselves. The President saw that to force a breach upon such points would only expose him to ridicule, and he lowered his demands to requesting his cabinet to put down slanders affecting a fellow-member, and cultivate friendly intercourse with one another. A formal reconciliation with Eaton followed, but the wounds were too deep to be thus healed.

1830. January.

Strange was it that the ambition of rank in fashionable society should be the entering wedge to split up the first of Democratic cabinets. But so it was; and Jackson only awaited a fit opportunity for casting it overboard and beginning anew. While the appearance of harmony and good will was kept up, he seldom consulted Ingham, Branch, or Berrien upon Executive affairs. Cabinet councils fell into disuse, though Van Buren, or "Matty," as the President familiarly called him, received constant proofs of the confidence of his chief. The conscious co-operation essential to a strong administration wholly failed. In short, this Eaton affair left Jackson to fall back for advice to what came to be called a "kitchen cabinet," the natural consequence of his habits and temperament. Men with whom he could smoke and converse at random, without the con-

straint of a council and clashing minds, men who deferred to him like staff officers, and yet whose zeal to serve and sustain him with the public ran constantly forward, these were his counsellors, and in such devotees he had constantly been blessed. Major Lewis of Tennessee, the capable manager of all movements for springing Jackson's name upon the public, a man with whom Jackson had refused to part, giving him an office with little work annexed, so as to keep him at Washington, was one of these. Isaac Hill was another, or would have become one, had not the Senate refused to confirm his appointment. Jackson's editor, the man who came to conduct the official organ at Washington, was necessarily a third; for Jackson relied upon instructing through the medium of the press more than any predecessor, feeling constantly the public opinion, and confiding his plans to the people. And in the course of years Amos Kendall, who had so narrowly escaped rejection because of the bitter prejudices raised against him, became presently the strongest as well as the most mysterious influence which swayed or guided the administration.* Kendall was a Massachusetts man by birth, a Kentuckian by adoption, and had edited a newspaper, practised law, and held a post-office before he came to Washington. Once a tutor in Clay's family and a political supporter, he had quarrelled with him, and this won for him Jackson's favor. Kendall remains an enigma: he was benevolent and had generous family traits; his enemies called him bad, one who prostituted his talents, but in what respect they did not state. Unquestionably he was a great politician, and knew how to handle great problems of state; but he rarely appeared in public, and the fame of his secret genius was enhanced by a remarkable faculty for silence. Few leaders of mankind were ever so happy in followers of skill, foresight, and unselfish ambition, who

* See Sumner's Jackson; 3 Parton's Jackson. Harriet Martineau wrote in 1836 of Kendall, his fame being by that time well established: "He is supposed to be the moving spring of the whole administration, the thinker, planner, and doer; but it is all in the dark." 1 Martineau's Western Travel.

allowed their own lives to be absorbed in promoting the fortunes of their chieftain and enhancing his personal fame, as Andrew Jackson.

A jealous rivalry between the partisans of Van Buren and Calhoun had been perceptible from the moment Jackson's election was assured. Both of these statesmen contended for influence with the new administration; and supposing Jackson to have served but one term, as he originally planned, the struggle between them for the successorship would have been a bitter one. But it suited Van Buren's plans to let the whole question of successorship wait four years longer; and convinced, early in 1830, that no one less popular than the General himself could carry on the fight with the Bank, nullification, and the American system, he promptly took the ground that Jackson should stand for a second term. This pleased Jackson, who always wished for himself the right of way. The smooth-running machinery of New York politics, which Van Buren had so carefully set in order, inspired, also, the President's admiration; and the distribution of the national offices as spoils of victory may be viewed as the wider application of New York methods. Besides this, Van Buren was a courteous, soft-spoken man, with whom it was impossible to have angry words; and so cautious in expressing ideas that he seemed often to double upon himself. This latter habit of mind stirred Jackson to mirth, for he in his own writings or utterances went straight to the mark. Van Buren's strength had been so frittered away in matters of party management that he did not bring a positive force to bear upon great problems of state, but left Jackson free to consult at pleasure his "kitchen cabinet," without betraying symptoms of envy. All this enhanced Van Buren's popularity with the President and his Tennessee friends; and Jackson's heart went out to him so strongly for lending his aid in bolstering up Mrs. Eaton's social pretensions that when he believed himself too sick to live out his first term he prepared a letter in December, 1829, under Lewis's eye, which would show, if

produced after his death, that Van Buren was his favorite choice for the next Presidency.* Van Buren was very anxious to dispel the reputation of intrigue that others had fastened upon him; and Jackson, certainly, had never cause to accuse him of playing double.

The New York *Courier and Enquirer*, Van Buren's organ, announced by March, 1830, that Jackson would be a candidate for re-election. Harrisburg and Albany nominations of Jackson for a second term were made about the same time. This movement was started by Van Buren and the President's untiring staff officers, Lewis pulling the wires. Calhoun and his friends were disturbed, but they secretly hoped that Jackson would adhere to his original purpose and retire in 1833, when the idol of Carolina would attain the great prize of his ambition. The nullification banquet was to have been Calhoun's counter-move for drawing the President away from the Van Buren influence and nearer to himself. Such a prodigy of fortune had he been thus far, keeping his place in the saddle under two administrations utterly opposed to one another, that he trusted fondly to his star. Relying, as Jackson had done, upon a strong southern support, he had blindly supposed that the brilliant dogmas which led his own imagination astray would unite the south without too greatly alarming that portion of the north whose votes were essential. Nor did Calhoun realize how far his rival, Van Buren, had already won Jackson's heart, nor how his own hold was loosening. He had, in truth, suffered in the President's good graces by seeming to lead in the attack on Mrs. Eaton, which was presently to end in driving Eaton out of the cabinet,—the plot, as Jackson fancied, in which all these studied insults to the Secretary's wife originated. The fault may have rested entirely with the Vice-President's wife; but the Vice-President himself had to bear the consequences, one of which was the enmity of those who had easiest access to the General's confidence, and who knew how to awaken distrust,

1830.

March. April.

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* See 3 Parton's Jackson; 38, 39 Niles's Register.

and implant in his mind their own dislikes. Jackson, without Calhoun's knowledge, had been growing cold towards him for some time. He doubted whether Calhoun had been thoroughly loyal to him either in 1825 or 1828. He suspected that Calhoun had made use of an old hero's popularity to ride into power behind him, and that his ardent henchmen were already hastening to push the old man aside, that young America might mount into his place.

Jackson's studied action at the Jefferson banquet was a rebuke at once to Calhoun's theories and his pretensions, and a warning. Nemesis was revealed scarcely a month later in a letter which sealed Calhoun's political doom.

1830. May 13. It was from the President himself, and enclosed the copy of a letter written recently by Crawford to Forsyth, which, revealing the secrets of the Monroe cabinet in 1818 upon the Seminole war, announced that Calhoun had proposed the arrest and punishment of Jackson in the course of those conferences. Announcing his great surprise at this revelation, and his constant understanding to the contrary, Jackson demanded to know whether this statement was correct.

Calhoun's answer betrayed the tenacity and depth of his national aspirations. In his extreme desire to stand well

May 20. with the President, and to defeat whatever intrigue of his enemies might have brought this revelation about, he answered Jackson's inquiry at great length, instead of either pointedly responding or refusing to be questioned upon the confidential expressions of a cabinet meeting. He admitted the charge in substance, but denounced Crawford for betraying the secret; and, going far into collateral inquiries, he tried to impress the President with the belief that this whole proceeding was a plot of enemies to

May 30. effect his political ruin. Jackson's response to this solicitous and undignified epistle was cold and repulsive. Unjustly to Calhoun, no doubt, he treated his whole conduct as perfidious. He disclaimed all interest in controversies which Calhoun might have with Crawford, and desired that further communications on this subject should cease.

Calhoun still persisted in writing, but Jackson would hear nothing, and gave the Vice-President plainly to understand that their friendship was forever sundered. Crawford had wreaked his vengeance at the ripe moment. It was to Calhoun like receiving a stab in the back just as he reached his hand to the summit, up which he had so perseveringly toiled; for Jackson's friendship had become essential to his national aspirations, as both he and Crawford well knew. And falling back, Calhoun, by the time he had risen and gathered himself up, crushed and wounded from the wreck of long cherished hopes, ceased to be a national man. He saw, like one from whose eyes the scales have fallen, that his new precepts might shatter the nation and dissolve the Union, and yet he pursued them. As for Jackson, we may well believe that he made the most of Crawford's base revelation to put off a friendship which of late had dragged heavily.*

The circumstances under which the President received his information from Crawford were singular, as Lewis relates the story. James A. Hamilton, a son of Alexander Hamilton,† sought out Crawford in January, 1828, bearing a conciliatory message from Jackson. The trip had been arranged with Lewis. He did not find Crawford, but saw Governor Forsyth of Georgia, who soon wrote that Jackson's enmity against Crawford had been groundless, since it was not he, but Calhoun, who proposed censuring Jackson in the cabinet councils of 1818. In April or May, Lewis was in New York, and Hamilton showed him the letter. Lewis appears to have kept the information to himself, craftily waiting his chance to use it with the General, and doing nothing to promote discord while the election was pending. In November, 1829, Jackson entertained Monroe at dinner like an old comrade. Ringgold, one of the guests, launched out in conversation some reference to the Seminole debate to help on this reunion of friends, stating, not quite accu-

* See 3 Parton's Jackson. And see Final Notes.

† He was connected with the State Department early in Jackson's administration. See *supra*, p. 466.

rately, in his warmth towards the Ex-President, that Monroe alone stood by Jackson in 1818. Lewis and Eaton after dinner kept up a conversation in Jackson's hearing about what Ringgold had said. The Peggy O'Neil war was then at its height. Jackson's attention was soon arrested; he asked questions, and then Lewis told him of the letter which Hamilton had shown him. Jackson posted Lewis to Hamilton the next day to get that letter, but Lewis returned without it, bringing word that as Forsyth was soon to arrive at Washington as a Senator from Georgia, it was best to consult him personally. Forsyth, when spoken to, preferred that Crawford should write for himself over his own signature. In this the President acquiesced; and at last the letter came. All this may have been accidental; but more probably Calhoun had enemies in the kitchen cabinet who hesitated a long time before they concluded to break with him and expose him to Jackson's wrath. We have seen, however, that these charges, among others, were bandied about to his injury before the election; and while the sources were anonymous they were traced into Georgia. Adams and Wirt believed that the present snare was deliberately contrived by Crawford to accomplish Calhoun's utter ruin. Calhoun pointed at Van Buren when defending himself with Jackson, but Van Buren positively denied any part or agency whatever in this disclosure, and there is no reason to doubt his word.

The correspondence thus commenced with Jackson led Calhoun to ransack thoroughly the cabinet councils on the Seminole war. Both Crawford and Calhoun had appealed to President Monroe, and upon some details were at variance. Calhoun received a letter from Crawford himself, about January, 1831, written under great excite-

1831. January. ment and stating some points in controversy between them; but Calhoun returned it, declining to receive any direct communication from him except through the President. "He is the principal, and you having voluntarily assumed the part of an informer, I decline to raise you to that level which would admit you to participate

directly in the discussion." In conducting his investigation Calhoun much wished a statement from Adams, but felt delicate about approaching him. At last he made known his request. Adams came forward, honorably, with his testimony, as though to save a drowning man. Calhoun published the whole Seminole correspondence in February, with an address to the people, and the public now learned that the two chief officers of the government had parted. Calhoun soon after called upon the late President, the first time since he had gone into retirement, to recognize his generous and disinterested offices. "I meet Mr. Calhoun's advances to a renewal of the intercourse of common civility," records Adams on this occasion, "because I cannot reject them; but I once had confidence in the qualities of his heart. It is not totally destroyed, but so impaired that it can never be fully restored." *

1831. February.

March 2.

This feud with Calhoun gave Jackson the opportunity he had wished to reconstruct his cabinet; but he deferred action until after Congress rose. Meanwhile, however, a change was made in the official organ of his administration. Jackson had relied confidently upon the *United States Telegraph* and its editor, Duff Green, who was printer to Congress, and enjoyed the Executive patronage besides. The *Telegraph* was the central organ both of Calhoun's friends and the Democratic party during the long canvass which had ended in Jackson's election. But Kendall and Lewis, who were always reconnoitring in their commander's interest, persuaded him that Green must be thrown aside and a new organ set up. Green, in truth, owed most to Calhoun,

* J. Q. Adams's Diary, 1831. And see Monroe MSS.; 3 Parton's Jackson. In Magazine American History, vol. 12, p. 308, "Monroe and the Rhea letter," (reprinted in "Historical, Briefs," p. 97) this writer discusses the various disputes of fact brought up in this Seminole correspondence.

It may be here remarked, (1903) that recent correspondence with the Rhea family discloses the important fact that, when John Rhea sent to Ex-President Monroe in 1831 his singular letter, described in the above article, he retained a copy, attested by witnesses, one of whom was Andrew J. Donelson, the nephew and intimate of Andrew Jackson.

and as the breach widened he felt forced to take his patron's side, though hoping till the last that the quarrel would heal over. Jackson yielded sadly enough to his advisers, who found him the very man for the emergency. Francis P. Blair of Kentucky, an occasional contributor to the *Frankfort Argus*, of that State, was the one chosen. Blair was an old friend and co-worker of Kendall's, and, like him, a man formerly attached to Clay, who had been carried by Kentucky politics into the Jackson party, and was deadly opposed to the Bank of the United States. He was at this time deeply in debt, and lived on the salaries of two Kentucky offices. The selection was an excellent one and gave great strength to Jackson's kitchen cabinet, for in antipathies, opinions, and general cast of mind he proved in thorough accord with Jackson. He was a belligerent writer, clear of expression, powerful in invective, strongly opposed to nullification, and yet in person slender and unimposing, amiable and modest, and ready to make a third of those invisible agencies, of infinite tact and shrewdness, whose constant toil was to make Andrew Jackson's name famous and formidable. Blair at once took Green's place in the kitchen cabinet, and the *Globe*, his new paper, sprang into existence as if by magic; the first number being issued December 7, 1830. Kendall and Lewis busied themselves to procure subscribers; the word was passed among the office-holders that this was the President's new organ; and the President himself took care that the department printing should go to the *Globe's* support. Beginning without capital or types, Blair's paper became in a few weeks a paying enterprise, and its able management, thoroughly harmonious with the administration, gave it a commanding influence in affairs until Van Buren was overthrown in 1840. Never, until the *Globe* was established, did a President's organ become an institution of government; for Jackson was the first of Presidents who ruled the country by means of the newspaper press; and that, too, a press whose controlling editorial force centred at Washington.*

* See 1 Benton's Thirty Years; Sumner's Jackson; 3 Parton's Jackson.

In foreign relations Jackson proved himself as fortunate as Adams was unfortunate, and the blunt soldier procured concessions which the best trained of our civilians had sought in vain. First of all McLane went to London with instructions to reopen negotiations on the subject of the trade to the West Indies. The ground taken was not promotive of American pride, for England was led to understand that the result of the election was a rebuke to the party responsible for the late dead-lock;* that with a change of administration had come a change of official opinion on the general merits of the question. We now frankly admitted that the equal admission of American vessels and productions to the West Indies could not be claimed as a right; and conceding that the terms of admission to the colony rested in the discretion of the parent country, we were ready and desirous to take the trade simply as a privilege, under the act of 1825. This retraction, or new statement of views, was very grateful to the British ministry. In truth, Canning's experiment of opening the colonial ports to all the world except the United States had not worked well; the colonists themselves had suffered by the loss of American products; and the present ministry of Great Britain were too anxious to have our manufactures and the high tariff acts put down not to meet these friendly overtures in a corresponding spirit. While negotiations were pending, Congress passed an act authorizing the President to declare the acts of 1818, 1820, and 1823 repealed whenever American vessels should be allowed in the West Indies on the same terms as British vessels from the United States, and when they should be allowed to carry goods from the colonies to any foreign ports to which British vessels might go.† There were no higgling reservations in this offer of reciprocity. Lord Aberdeen said, when the statute was read, that this was all England had ever demanded. The direct trade with the British West

1830.

* *Supra*, p. 390.

† Act May 29, 1830.

Indies was re-opened on the basis of mutual interest, and the President issued his proclamation on the 5th of October. Though admitted nominally on the same terms with other nations, we fared better, because of our neighborhood to these islands and our abundant supply of the provisions and lumber its inhabitants needed.* The recovery of this trade, never again closed, which involved a ready interchange of temperate and tropical productions, gained for Jackson's administration the just applause of all but the angry opposition, who complained that our government had forfeited its self-respect by begging as a favor what was due as a right. This exception, though natural, was unjust.

A second diplomatic achievement, not open to such carping criticism, related to the long-standing claims against France, for spoliations on our commerce, committed under the reign of Napoleon. These claims had been a fruitless subject of negotiation ever since 1815; nor was progress possible so long as the Bourbons held sway. But in 1830 the unpopular Charles was hurled from power, and a brief revolution resulted in placing Louis Philippe on the throne with a written constitution which defined sovereign power. In this moderate triumph of popular principles over despotism and usurpation Lafayette bore a conspicuous part; and during the crisis of change France leaned for the last time, and trustingly, upon that firm patriot who upheld liberty and conservatism together. This auspicious turn in affairs raised new hopes of the settlement which Jackson had already pursued with energy and determination. By a treaty signed at Paris, July 4, 1831, France agreed to pay twenty-five million francs, and the United States one and a half million francs, in final settlement of all outstanding claims of the citizens of one country upon the government of the other.† This was a triumph enough of

1830. September.

1831. July 4.

* See 1 Benton's Thirty Years; 39 Niles's Register; diplomatic correspondence.

† See diplomatic correspondence; annual messages; Sumner's Jackson.

itself to have cleared an administration from many blemishes, and this narrative but slightly anticipates the course of events in referring to it.

On the whole, the record of this energetic administration for the first Congressional cycle could not be said to have weakened it in those States upon whose votes it had hitherto depended for support. Jackson betrayed rudeness and ignorance in various points of policy, but there was something of sagacity, fervid energy, and independence in his dealing with the main problems of the day which gave a piquant interest to the present conduct of affairs, and went far towards establishing his popularity more firmly than ever. Force of character makes a way more quickly than correct ideas; and a democracy like ours is always a little blind to the faults of its heroes, and more especially of its military ones, so long as their fidelity remains above suspicion. There could be no question of Jackson's democracy, and what was more, he loved his country, took pride in the high position he held, and was a man of personal integrity, untainted by corruption. His course was closely watched by the friends of the late administration, but Adams, a judicious observer of events, saw little reason for hoping that this new President would be overthrown at the next election.* Personal popularity, founded upon his military services, gave to the present administration its immense strength, and that personal popularity had been well maintained. The surrender of the Indians to the States within whose bounds they were located increased Jackson's influence at the southwest; the more so that he had burdened the Union with the general expense of removing the tribes. While frowning upon nullification, he yet showed a solicitude to remove the grievance which had given rise to South Carolina's incipient rebellion, and he took practical ground against internal improvements. The loyal south would cling to him for this; and even his desertion of the federal judi-

* 8 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs, 1830, 1831.

ciary would not hurt him. The approaching discharge of public debt brought back the halcyon days of Jefferson, while the foreign concessions gained from England and France appealed to the pride of our whole people. In methods as well as theories Jackson kept closely to the wishes of the majority and held his party.

But a new organization of national parties was the inevitable tendency; and questions were now arising with the progress of the administration which would precipitate earnest discussion and bring out opposing leaders. Adams's late supporters called loudly for some one to reorganize and lead them. Their voice was for Clay, who still remained on his farm. He had early in 1830 made his trip to Louisiana, everywhere received with warmth, and often enthusiasm. His magical touch was bringing back his own State, but the process was very slow, and to his chagrin the local election of 1830 did not bring the overwhelming majority he had hoped for, and his nomination as President by the Kentucky legislature still hung fire. A curious confidential letter, written by Crawford, in March of that year, showed Clay how impossible it was for him to succeed in 1832, and proposed to run in his stead with his support, the writer promising him a place in his cabinet as a reward, together with the certainty of succeeding when he should retire.* In Webster, whose habits of mind and surroundings unfitted him for marshalling the new ranks of the opposition, Clay found an earnest ally; both agreeing, however, that Jackson would be rechosen unless either Virginia, Pennsylvania, or New York could be detached from him. Webster felt by the time the first session closed that a crisis had arrived requiring Clay, whether willing or unwilling, to be brought out. "Parties," he wrote, "must now nec-

* See Clay's Private Correspondence, March 31, 1830. This was several weeks before Crawford's letter which caused the President to renounce Calhoun was elicited by Forsyth. *Supra*, p. 500. Crawford evidently supposed at that time that Jackson would not be a candidate for re-election, but that Van Buren, Calhoun, and Clay would contest the succession. He intimates that his friends may make a similar proposal to Van Buren, but prefers that Clay should accede.

essarily be started out anew; and the great ground of difference will be tariff and internal improvements. You are necessarily at the head of one party, and General Jackson will be, if he is not already, identified with the other. The question will be put to the country. Let the country decide it." *

Section II.

THE UNITED STATES IN 1831.

We are now at the portal of an epoch full of eager progress and the crowding, trampling ranks of humanity. It is an epoch in which science and sentiment, glory and degradation, the desire of material substance and devotion to principle, are found strangely blended; until above the din of industry is heard the roar of the cannon, and the smoke curls upward from many a battle-field, where the stubborn Americans, invincible when united, have turned their arms and energy upon one another. Let us take of the age we are leaving, already becoming a primitive one by comparison, a brief retrospect, like one who ascends a mountain road and looks back for the last time upon the green meadows and wavy slopes gently nestling in the perspective, before appear the high mountain crests and ravines furrowed with deep lines, the picture of fierce but care-worn nature.

The census of 1830 revealed an aggregate population in the United States of 12,866,020, being nearly the average increase, during the decade just closed, for doubling the number of inhabitants in thirty years. This population was distributed among twenty-four States, of which Missouri was the latest admitted, and the three territories of Florida, Michigan, and Arkansas. Florida was a Spanish annexation, but otherwise the map of the United States

* Webster to Clay, May 29, 1830; Clay's Private Correspondence.

had scarcely changed within twenty years. The area comprised within our frontiers at this time was 725,406 square miles, and upon its settled portion the average density of population, which increased with every census, might be reckoned at a fraction above 20 to the square mile. Population spread to the westward no longer in large groups outside the main body of continuous settlement as formerly, but rather in small patches, which kept closely to the chief rivers. Indiana settlers had followed up the Wabash and its forks; those of Illinois were creeping into the interior from the mouth of the Illinois river and points on the Mississippi nearly opposite St. Louis. Leaving out old Detroit and its vicinity, it might be said that the whole fertile region since parcelled among the States of Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, was in 1830 virgin soil, occupied by Indian tribes; and at the southern extremity of Lake Michigan, where a small wooden village snuggled close to the fort, the Great Father at Washington summoned his red children a year or two later in the first of Chicago conventions. Since 1820 the southwestern tier of States bordering upon the Gulf had greatly increased in population as the Indian belt of reservations lessened, but the most thickly-settled States of the Union were still to be found on the Atlantic slope and north of the Potomac. Ohio surpassed in this respect her sisters of the central valley, while west of the great yellow flood scarcely 30,000 inhabitants could be found outside the borders of two States, Louisiana and Missouri, and these ranged mostly along the banks of the Arkansas, exploring close to the river. Herds of buffaloes roamed the remote and immeasurable prairies west of the Mississippi, as they had roamed the eastern pastures of Illinois thirty years earlier. The base of the Rocky mountains was still to Americans an unexplored and unattractive region. West of that giant range to the Pacific shore sloped the lonely Oregon country, not yet bounded as against England, but left open without prejudice of conflicting claims. Here at the mouth of the Columbia river, where the Pacific ocean came in view, the United States had long maintained

a military post, but the settlement of this distant region had not been encouraged for fear it would end in dismemberment from the Union. Hence the line of the Sabine river practically defined the western limit of American population, and on printed maps of the United States the Mississippi river with its branches still occupied conveniently enough the left-hand side and not the centre.*

America and her institutions were no longer to be expounded by superficial travellers alone, but by political philosophers like De Tocqueville, Grund, and Harriet Martineau, who came to appreciate and not disparage. The very name "American," now bestowed upon the people of the United States by universal consent, identified them with a continent; for in the new world, at least, our rank was first, and our example fast pervading. The whole tendency of the last fifteen years had been to establish the American Union more firmly as a nation. For, composite and complex as this government doubtless was, so that each State might regulate and administer independently the mass of those concerns which affect the individual in his home and business relations, an elevated love of country found its only grand expression in the growth and prosperity of the whole Union. This central government, limited and specific as might be its objects, had yet the greater energy and directness; the starry flag, the army and navy, ocean commerce, diplomatic intercourse, the power to make war or peace, to acquire and regulate new territory and increase from time to time the membership of States, all were national. Born of the immortal strife, this Union had been firmly established by a second war for independence. The names of Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, shone in the same glorious constellation. The magnificient domain of this nation, enlarged by peaceful purchase, the procreation of New States,

* See 6 J. Q. Adams's Memoirs (1824); 8 U. S. Statutes at Large, 249; census of 1880, vol. i, with maps of density, etc.

while old ones remained in territory contracted, the constant move and interchange of population, the increasing facilities of travel, traffic, and diffusion of ideas, all tended to draw American States closer in laws and manners, and to foster both the national sentiment and a sense of interdependence, which presented the Union as indispensable to the well-being of the whole country. Under such conditions State pride could hardly flourish beyond the borders of the old thirteen, nor there, unless citizens of colonial descent were haughty to new comers and new ideas.

It was an error not rarely committed by strangers to judge of the whole United States by one part. Massachusetts and Louisiana, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, were really as unlike in habits and character as England and Scotland, or so many different kingdoms of Germany. Hence Europeans were often misled by gossiping writers upon American life, like Mrs. Trollope, who saw but one phase of it, and stretched the truth to broaden a caricature. Every State, every section, bore marks of its peculiar origin, and there were palpable differences in manners, traits, and social institutions, which to fairly explain and reconcile required one to trace carefully the threads of local chronology, if not to make a careful tour of the whole Union. Those differences we have already sketched; * and it only remains to add that in a people like ours, essentially modern, the influences which moulded each separate State were easily studied. For though Europe furnished the starting-point, yet the European countries whence we were derived had each its national character fully formed when American colonization began. British emigration alone, that most powerful element of all, the foundation of British colonies on the various points of the Atlantic coast, was accompanied by conditions so strikingly different as to give to the Anglo-Americans and their offspring a strong family likeness, and at the same time an unlikeness. Especially, at the present stage of our development as a people, was it

* See vol. ii. chap. 7.

needful to distinguish between Americans of slave and free States, and those again of communities old and new. Only in a free State might one labor for himself and win position by it; only in a new one did he escape conventional society and the usual exaction of deference to the local aristocracy. Lines of demarcation like these were graven deeply into the Anglo-American nature.

It must be allowed that the Americans of this day, they, at all events, who stood for its highest social expression, had no conventional standard of their own by which social conduct was regulated. Certainly it was not strange if those lately provincials bore something still of provincial habits; but the complaisance, amounting in fashionable circles often to mean servility, with which the dress and deportment of London or Paris were copied by them, exposed Americans to much merited reproach. Wealth was expended in widening the social chasm and vainly attempting to maintain an exclusive upper set in the midst of democracy. Men aspiring thus to leadership surfeited every new foreigner, who came well introduced, with entertainments which aped the foreign standard, and thought themselves dukes in demeanor while behaving more like footmen. Instead of standing on simple republican ground and demanding to be judged by their own conventional standard, they set themselves in open contradiction to their home institutions and industrious habits, and found the guest's contempt their too frequent reward. The whole tendency of the present age being cosmopolitan, so that national fashions yield to international, it is possible that such a standard may never be fixed; but the American, gaining in intelligence, polish, and the confidence which his equal institutions inspire, will rather, as he travels, become renowned for a certain dash and assurance of manners the world over, and hobnob with European nobles instead of cringing to them.

In spite of existing disadvantages, however, the American had already gained something of a national character in European estimation and his own. In marked contrast

with his English progenitor, he was depicted as long-bodied, lank, and bilious, awkward in his movements, inclined to stretch at ease, drawling in speech, of imperturbable rather than hasty or passionate temper, having a keen, roving eye, features inclining to sharpness, and a corkscrew inquisitiveness, from which there was no possible escape. His fertile expedients for every emergency were astonishing; he showed himself equally at home on sea or land, and was exceedingly shrewd at a bargain, often carrying his point artfully under an aspect of simplicity. In his hat of roughly-dressed beaver, when he wore it, he stuffed handkerchief, cigars, letters, and newspapers. He seemed always busy, always on the alert to discern the main chance. His meals were crammed in haste, yet his stomach seemed that of an ostrich. He chewed tobacco or smoked, spitting incessantly whether he talked or meditated, and showed a genius for inventing mixed drinks. The public meeting was his favorite recreation; and his conversation, while full of shrewdness and good sense, fell into argument, and took so readily the turn of a harangue that, to quote De Tocqueville, if he should chance to become warm in the discussion, he would say, "Gentlemen" to the person with whom he was speaking. "What do you think of our country?" was the first question with which he accosted one from abroad; and if the answer was critical, he resented it. This was a caricature, but as near to the life, perhaps, as national personifications of the kind are apt to be. Restless activity and ingenuity in practical things were northern more than southern traits; but in all off-hand sketches of the American, whether on our own stage and in our own literature, or elsewhere, he presents the same physiognomy, be the type southern or western, or that more familiar still, the bland and homespun "Brother Jonathan," whose New England nativity cannot be mistaken.

Nothing was more firmly implanted by this time in the American nature than a fundamental faith in the sovereignty of the people, and a conviction that the will of the majority should rule. The principle was applied in

private co-operation, secular or religious, as well as the affairs of state; and even they who happened to be in a present minority assented to the rule, knowing well its value to themselves should they hereafter preponderate in numbers, as they hoped, and turn the scales. This majority doctrine was the vital function of our American system; for it imposed self-discipline, pointed to persuasion as the true means of acquiring personal influence, and kept the general society constantly armed against the arrogance of its individual members. Americans no longer owned a preference for monarchies; they agreed in the support of popular government, and the only essential point in dispute related to the extension of the suffrage and political rights to men formerly disqualified. Under such a system imagination would find less scope than the sense of civic responsibility; errors were committed, and abuses suffered through ignorance or a lax supervision of the people's servants, but correction followed discovery, with a temperate exercise of justice. In the ruling race of this Union the love of freedom and improvement was admirably blended with respect for the laws and the disposition to deal moderately in affairs; and hence the vast superiority of this republican experiment as contrasted with that of the turbulent races of Spanish America. Politics interested all, and its passions might sometimes provoke scenes of violence; but violence recoiled upon those who attempted it, and every open attempt of a minority to wrest a victory by force was frowned down. The danger under our peaceful system consisted rather in the fraudulent effort of partisans to figure a majority by bribery, secret intimidation, a corrupt ballot, and the falsifying of returns; and what made that danger the greater, when men undertook to live by politics, was the necessity all politicians were under, as a class, of paying court to the people in order to rise. Flatterers and time-servers might thus drive high-minded and sincere statesmen from their seats. These were evils to be watched and checked, if not wholly prevented; and evils will abound sufficiently under every form of government. Birth and

wealth excited envy; but every citizen of superior talent, having a genuine good to accomplish, was likely to find his true field of public usefulness, if he persevered. Hitherto, at least, in American history, the chief honors of the republic had fallen to the virtuous and intelligent, and patriotism felt the inspiration of great examples.

If the pride of the American in his nation had at this period something of morbid solicitude that his visitors should feel as he did, we must not fail to respect the seriousness of purpose with which he was working out a noble experiment against the prejudices of civilized Europe. He wished his cause to be fairly stated abroad, and was angry when it was not. His earnestness made him espouse in feeling the cause of liberty throughout the world. Wherever humanity fought for its rights, wherever the yoke of tyranny was shaken off and men contended to be free, there might be found the American heart. The first breezes of the French revolution sent the blood leaping in our veins. We were the first of nations to extend to Bolivar and the Spanish Americans sympathy and welcome; the Greeks and their cause had our early God-speed; Kossuth, Garibaldi, in turn, won later our enthusiasm. Indeed popular feeling in the American Union was often so feverish when thus stimulated, that those responsible for affairs kept with difficulty that path of neutrality which sound policy and tradition enjoined; often the popular excitement spent itself in meetings and contributions, and then it was discovered that impulse had carried us beyond the bounds of rational judgment. Cold calculation and interest could not sway the American feeling, but the prudent after-thought saved us from folly. It seemed often as if the American knew no empire less than the universal heart of mankind; for in whatever community public opinion and the will of the majority could hold a realm in steady obedience, there was the American fatherland.

Travellers in the United States were impressed by the constant motion and activity of a whole people. The hum

of industry was ceaseless. Cities and towns were fast developing, and every one appeared to interest himself in building up the local prosperity and his own together. Highways, canals, bridges, great public works, were now under way; the construction of railroads, too, had commenced, mostly by chartered companies organized with private capital, though none were yet equipped for general traffic or ready to exchange horse power for the steam locomotive. In northern towns the whole community was absorbed in toil from morning to night. No class of idlers, pampered by luxury, was visible on the one hand, no vagabonds on the other, who lived by beggary. Perquisites, gratuities, those little tokens so common abroad, which import that the giver classes the receiver with an order lower than his own, were here scarcely known in these days; for an American, poor though he might be, worked for his regular recompense and no more. In all but the slave States the idea prevailed that labor was compatible with gentility; and unlike European tradespeople, who retire to enjoy their ease when they have acquired a competence, the citizen of a free State worked all his life to amass and accumulate. Thus did business grow to be the absorbing interest of existence, the strong tie which united one with his fellow-citizens, and kept him from rusting. The mainspring of American activity consisted in the hope held out to all of acquiring property and social consideration, regardless of parentage and early surroundings.

No attempt to create in this Union a permanent aristocracy was likely to succeed. Political supremacy and superior affluence are the indispensable attributes of such a class. But power resided with the great mass of the people; and as for wealth, such was the legislation in each State abolishing entails and favoring an equal distribution among kindred, besides the constant opportunities to make great fortunes, that the richest might have begun life the poorest, while the handsomest estate was likely to be dashed in pieces and dispersed soon after the owner's death. Marriages, too, were contracted by children, and not their parents,

and hence were more likely to be disinterested. Early marriage with offspring was, indeed, the American's usual lot; his heart's best wish was to improve his lot so as to give his babes a better bringing up than his had been. Many, once more, who felt the blessing they owed to popular institutions, and wished to leave a name, bequeathed great sums for objects of public charity; Girard, of Philadelphia, for instance, once a poor cabin boy, who, dying in 1831, without near kindred, left millions to found a college for orphans, besides other funds for the benefit of his adopted city.

While thus pursuing his daily vocation, the ambition to rise and expand asserted itself in the American quite in contrast with the fixed habits and plodding routine of the working life abroad. An English business was slowly built up by the succeeding generations of a single family. The French shopkeeper delighted in small sales at large profits; he would put his wares in his window, make a tempting and tasteful display, praise up everything he had to offer, chaffer and higgle, striking for the highest price and then coming down to his customer's standard. Frenchmen are known to be the most admirable of economists, capable of getting the greatest amount of worldly pleasure out of a small income. Americans, on the other hand, inclined to make more and spend more than those who followed the same pursuit abroad; their tradespeople and shopkeepers aimed to become merchant princes, and the effort was not so much to secure a few rich patrons as to serve the great public. "Large sales and small profits," was the American motto of business, and bold speculations, a wide range of plans, gave the zest to every mercantile pursuit. This suited well the tastes of American customers of the general run, who, in this age, looked for a plentiful supply of the necessaries of life, careless of its luxuries, and were fickle in their patronage, wandering about to trade with this one and that, constantly seeking where they could buy the best article at the cheapest rate. In the cant phrase, to buy a thing "at a bargain" was to get it for

less than it was worth. Retailers rose in time to the grade of wholesale dealers, and the successful merchant was quite apt to transfer his son to a profession or some genteel pursuit like banking or brokerage, instead of admitting him to his own prosaic trade, of which, in secret, both were half ashamed. Another peculiar feature of American business, and Grund observed this most in the large Atlantic cities, was the prevalent extension of the credit system, which was regulated, not as in European countries, upon the strict basis of property, but by the lender's confidence in the person of the borrower. Resolute and enterprising men were trusted in connection with their plans, so that the capital of financiers was easily obtained for operations which promised great wealth in return. In no country in the world could it be said that credit was given upon considerations so purely personal and speculative as in the United States; and though admitting that no European country of the same population showed so long a list of business failures, yet, on the whole, profits bore here a greater proportion to the losses by insolvency than anywhere else.*

Mechanics, the laboring classes of America, so to speak, were skilful and regular. They saved their earnings, they employed their leisure in reading, their emulation was to better their state and rise. Emigrants fresh from the old country might not wholly overcome the vices they brought over; but laborers American-born, either of foreign or native extraction, on the farm, or in the workshop, and American sailors, had no equals on the face of the earth. The American common people, that portion of the inhabitants least likely to come in contact with the tourist who sought attentions while he took down notes, were indeed the glory and safeguard of America, progenitors of a vigorous race, hardy and sagacious, always ready to fill the places of delicate families higher in the scale as they died out. The arts were not yet diversified in the United States, nor

* Grund's Americans.

did mechanical perfection exist here as abroad; but ingenuity, the power of mind to grasp a principle and adapt parts of a mechanism, was an American characteristic, and promised great results. This people was sure to become distinguished at no distant day for inventions and constructions of practical utility likely to yield a pecuniary profit.

Within fifteen years great changes had taken place in the organization of business to meet the growing extension of industries requiring the employment of large capital. Individual enterprise in trade yielded slowly though with jealousy to the modern principle of co-operation. Since the old law of partnership was attended with great disadvantages in point of personal liability, the practice of chartering corporations for various business pursuits had come much into vogue in the leading States of America, special acts being passed by each legislature.* Changes in the direction of permitting limited partnership were also considered. Hitherto in American society, a wage population or working class arrayed against the investors of money could scarcely be said to exist, so constantly had capital, and that to a modest aggregate, been divided up among enterprises comparatively small. But the transition was now close at hand. During the years 1826–30 money in the United States was plenty, and sought new fields of active and combined employment. The vast cotten and woollen companies of New England had been started since the tariff act of 1824. For Pennsylvania's anthracite coal the demand greatly increased as its value for fuel and smelting purposes became known. Canals were newly opened. The facilities, however, for moving vast mineral products and merchandise in cargoes from inland points were little by comparison in this or any other country, and made less of a

* The monopoly feature of these new concerns was abnoxious to the people, and there had been various attempts made already to check the rapid increase of corporations, as in the New York legislature of 1821, which required a two-thirds vote of both Houses for every such act. Incorporation open to the public under general acts, a check of itself to monopolies, had not been established so early.

wage population, until the age of railroads, which was just dawning. The census of 1830 showed but a moderate change from rural to urban population within the space of twenty years, nor was it until the second decade later that a rapid movement began from country neighborhoods, which, operating like a social revolution, shows the Union of the present day that more than a quarter part of its whole people are dwellers in cities and large towns. Of those various elements, moreover, which so disturb in our modern day the normal equilibrium of the sexes, and hence interfere with their pairing off and continuing constant in marriage, none save the migration of men into new territory could so early be said to operate.*

Such was the pride felt to maintain one's social standing that they whose speculations had turned out badly kept a calm countenance if they could, and covered up their losses. When failure was inevitable the debtor composed with his creditors, and if young and energetic, would soon, most likely, be on his feet again. Anything like severe pressure upon the unfortunate was discountenanced by the general voice; fraud must be shown, and the immediate danger was rather that swindling and breach of trust, the crimes to which native Americans were most prone, would be passed over too lightly. There was no national bankrupt law at this day, but each State pursued its own insolvent system, often so as practically to prefer its resident creditors. Legislation had since 1817 strongly tended to the abolition of imprisonment for debt, New York and Kentucky being among the earliest States to take action in that humane direction; and after a persistent agitation of the subject before Congress, a corresponding act for the benefit of debtors of the United States passed in the session which had just expired.†

The whole tendency, indeed, of American legislation, penal and criminal, was unmistakably generous and philan-

* Compare Tables in Census for 1880, vol. i.

† See act March 2, 1831, re-enacted and extended by later statutes.

thropic. True was it that the mass of society interested itself in maintaining law and order and upholding the individual rights of person and property. Every violent irruption of a mob was followed by a strong rally of the citizens, without distinction of party, to remonstrate and protect the sufferer. Even lynch law in the remote settlements was to be explained as a means adopted by the better inhabitants for punishing evil-doers and striking terror to the lawless when courts and the civil authorities failed in their duty. For independently of the magistrate, if need be, society showed itself self-sustaining and organized intelligently in its own interests. But American institutions in their normal operation yielded to benevolence, more readily than discipline, as time went on; benevolence, succor to the unfortunate, even to the fallen, were breathed into the codes of enlightened States. In this moulding of jurisprudence, the innate love of popularity inseparable from leadership in the affairs of a republic might be traced; the increasing dependence, too, of elective magistrates upon the common voters; but more still, that humanizing influence which democracy itself comes to exert upon a Christian community. The stocks and whipping-post had disappeared; flogging, a more effectual means, perhaps, for bringing brutal men to a right comprehension of conduct than the fines or imprisonment we have since substituted, was sufficiently condemned as brutalizing to the flogger and to society in the mass; even the gaunt gallows kept its place with difficulty for the sheriff to use upon murderers.

Livingston's famous code of 1821, which we should observe was never fully accepted in Louisiana, and embodied projects impracticable of necessity in a country where Executive discipline is always fitful, proposed a substitute for capital punishment truly Venetian in the refinement of cruelty, and fit only for an irresponsible government to carry out where malice may direct the policy. The culprit was to be confined for life in a solitary cell painted black, an epitaph placed on his door for the beholder to shudder at, his food coarse bread and water, and his cell a living

grave.* Of no small advantage was it in an American State that the most solemn penalty denounced by the law was quickly paid, and the Executive's work once done could not be undone.

The criminal reformer has, indeed, a task before him when no means of punishment are left him to consider but the variations of fine and imprisonment in a society which sooner or later pardons or forgets. But a grander idea cherished by Livingston was to so enlarge the scope of penal legislation as to bring all institutions for criminal punishment and criminal prevention under a single system, so that crime might be anticipated and the pauper class whence criminals were most recruited held under a sort of paternal supervision. His humane researches and the experiments already commenced in several of our northern States made a profound impression in Europe as well as this continent;† and while places of public confinement abroad were still used for punishment only, and philanthropists like Howard had accomplished little more than to better their condition, America first set the example of the penitentiary system, and inspired other countries to encourage the reform of convicts. The Philadelphia prison was of such institutions the most remarkable, and at this era drew many visitors, with its frowning walls and castellated towers, its loopholed windows, portcullis, and high iron-studded doors, but above all by its means of discipline. Here prevailed the system of solitary confinement, combined with solitary labor, the public exposure of prisoners as scavengers or in the pillory having been for many years discontinued. The convict was placed, immediately upon his entrance, in a cell freely ventilated from above, well warmed and lighted; but he saw none of the other inmates by day or night, nor could discover the plan and arrangement of the building. Work was given him, which he performed

* See Hunt's Life of Edward Livingston.

† De Tocqueville came over as one of a commission appointed to report upon the prison system of the United States, and some reforms were introduced into France in consequence.

by himself; the cells were so placed as to permit of a constant espionage by secret police; there was an outer yard, in which he took his solitary exercise at regular hours. His meals he ate in his cell. Even when divine service was held and the small shutter removed from his grated door, a curtain was put up in the corridor that the prisoners might not look at one another nor penetrate the mystery of their surroundings. Solitude like this must have indueed reflection, and thus was the first step taken toward penitence; and relieved, as he was, of prison companionship, the guilty one was likely neither to succumb to the shame of his situation nor become contaminated by vicious associates. The New York penitentiary system, as carried out at Sing Sing, and still earlier at Auburn, differed in imposing silence rather than solitude upon the prisoners. The convict breathed the air of his solitary cell at night, but he moved all day in the open air and worked unfettered. Every criminal on entering was taught a useful trade, if he had not one already. Convicts cut the stone at Sing Sing, and helped erect and finish their own abode of punishment. They went about during hours of labor under the direction of a handful of overseers, marching to and from their cells after a singular fashion, with bodies close together and legs moving as one; and each one at meal-time would take up his plate in the kitchen without stopping or dropping out of line, eating its contents in his private quarters. All this routine went on in profound silence; no laughing, not even a glance of recognition being permitted. To enforce strict obedience among these thousand prisoners, many of them murderers and reprobates, must have required, therefore, the most perfect discipline. Of the two systems thus presented, that pursued at Philadelphia demanded less vigilance, fewer petty inflictions on the part of overseers, and it made unquestionably the deeper impression on the prisoner's mind, so as to diminish for years the number of commitments. But it was harshly criticised. Lafayette was one of those who expressed the belief that a solitary confinement so protracted would cause insanity;

experience, however, proving the reverse, so long as the prisoner was kept at healthy labor. The tendency in the several States was, on the whole, to the New York system, which was, perhaps, less costly, and certainly was more popular, and, besides, that which the criminal himself preferred.* As a general rule the prisoner's work brought him no recompense, for the principle was that his vicious course had cost the public more than he would be able to repay.

Reformatories for children, like what were already known in England, had been opened in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia,—private institutions at first, yet deriving some support from the State. In Philadelphia were various other benevolent institutions, well sustained by private munificence, for the sick and insane, for widows, for orphans, for the deaf, dumb, and blind. In the square occupied by the brick buildings of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and surrounded by high walls and an iron fence, stood a bronze statue of Penn himself, attired in square-cut coat, long waistcoat, and cocked hat, an excellent type of the Quakerism which still controlled that excellent charity. West's large painting, "Healing the sick," which West gave to this hospital, was kept on exhibition, and yielded the managers $400 annually. Next to Philadelphia, Boston was famous for its charities and co-operative schemes of benevolence.

The readiness of our American to organize in the cause of reform extended readily from politics to the social life. Evil results, shown in the concrete, reached quickly the depth of the popular instinct. From the secret abduction of one man, followed, as people suspected, by his murder,

* Neither silence nor solitude, as a rule, is now enforced in American prisons so strictly as either of the above systems at first proposed; and the reform feature seems to become secondary in tendency to that of making the culprit comfortable and happy. Training the convict in habits of labor is perhaps the chief "penitentiary" feature observable in most of our States at present. A recent visit to the Philadelphia prison in 1883 showed this writer that the accommodations were at present too small for pursuing its peculiar system to the letter, many of the cells constructed for solitary occupation being now shared by two inmates.

had sprung up the strong party of Anti-Masonry. The sad tale of the drunkard's fate produced a parallel movement, less political in character, but more impressive. Prior to 1825 the use of ardent spirits in the United States was almost universal, and intoxication might be pronounced the national vice. At the chief colleges liquor was openly sold from the booths upon public days, and municipal authorities would provide free punch for those who marched on a training-day. The clerks in the country store mixed their toddy together at noon, retailing liquor to customers for the rest of the day. The thirst of travellers by the wearisome stage and steamboat was proverbial. The office of an inn was styled the bar-room, and on the dinner-table stood decanters of brandy free to the guests. To correct a popular vice ruinous to its victims, American temperance societies were organized, the first of the kind, probably, ever instituted on such a scale. The movement commenced in Boston in February, 1824, the grand principle proposed being abstinence from strong drink, and its object to change by "light and love" the habits of the nation. The call met a hearty response, first in New England and afterwards from the people of every State in the Union. At the close of the year 1829 more than 1000 of these societies had been formed. The importation of spirits into the United States, which was over $5,000,000 in 1824, fell by 1830 to about $1,100,000. More than fifty distilleries were stopped; hundreds of merchants renounced the traffic. Through these organized efforts a great social improvement was visible. The wealthy and influential interested themselves in the work; and, though the vice of intemperance may never be eradicated, this crusade, entered upon with enthusiasm, saved many thousands who were descending to the grave as drunkards, holding them up by the needful support of united example. These and like efforts for social reform were voluntary, and supported from private means.

Were it in moral or religious association, the liberty, the

welfare of the American nation was constantly identified with the virtue of its people. Religion in the United States had ere this been wholly divorced from public patronage, and universal toleration was practised. Freedom and the voluntary system encouraged a multitude of sects, each body supported, not by tithes, but by the free-will offerings of its worshippers. The teachings of the pulpit were Protestant, evangelical, for the most part, and preachers appealed to the conduct of practical life, laying their stress on Bible precepts. Clergymen vied with one another in building up separate societies, but officiated together at funerals, prayer-meetings, and on town occasions, as though servants equally of the public, and eager to let their liberality shine before men. The Roman church they tolerated, and held this toleration highly meritorious; for in most States it seemed a foreign establishment in polity, doctrine, and membership; nor truly could the native American, more than his progenitor, be always kept from mobbing a priest or burning down a nunnery. Most of our American churches asked no foundation earlier than the Reformation; ritual observances, the surplice, printed prayers, the cross itself, they abhorred as Catholic emblems. The English Episcopal church was thought the half-way house to Rome; and upon the Pope and the Devil the preacher bestowed equal maledictions. With Methodists and Baptists—with others, too, of the largest denominations—training up children in the fold appeared less the aim than to produce in adults a sudden conversion or change of heart; hence their frequent revivals and camp-meetings, and the fervid exhortations employed in order to press people into a religious excitement. Whether from conviction or caprice, members of the same family now began to scatter in the choice of a religious society, and steeples multiplied in all the large towns, a sure sign that free thought was actively at work upon problems of the future life. And yet the sobriety and conservatism which American society still manifested in things sacred, freely as they discussed affairs of temporal rule,

was remarkable. The press and common opinion coincided in a firm support of Christianity and the stated observances of public worship and prayer; the family Bible was the precious volume of every household, and skepticism scarce dared to rear its head.

Civil revolution, an increased intensity of existence, the startling exploits of modern science,—changes, too, in the attitude which journalism assumes towards those who seek notoriety or offer novel ideas,—have since brought American thought to reverence revealed truth less and penetrate more searchingly into the hidden nature of things. But before 1831 bold innovations, social or religious, were rarely announced, still less reduced to experiment. Owen, who came over from England to found a western settlement upon the community plan, failed utterly, and his bald Deism caused him to be detested, besides, wherever he lectured. The dancing Shakers, whose tenets of self-abstinence could offend no one, amused the world's people at Lebanon Springs on the hot Sundays of summer as they pranced back and forth, males and females apart, singing a lively air in nasal cadence, their arms close to their bodies and their hands paddling the air. But of fanatism like this there was little in the country. The existing phase of the slavery question, which seemed to suffocate the meddlesome conscience, was of itself enough to discourage anything like a heroic treatment of other social problems. Radicalism was hateful in the very sound. Legislators made haste slowly in changing the old order. Women submitted to the law of coverture; they found a busy sphere in household pursuits, and the strong arm of the husband, father, or brother afforded protection and support. The home was the solace and incentive of American industry; marriage was fruitful, children an absorbing interest; and, though the knot might sometimes chafe, divorce was a remedy rarely invoked.

In popular education no country of the civilized world bore comparison with the United States, with the exception of Protestant Germany. There the common-school

system may be said to have originated; here it flourished as the palladium of freedom, for no means of keeping up the great mass of voters to the standard of virtue and correct conduct was so universally acceptable as the diffusion of knowledge. Indeed, the laudation of learning above religion, while the State stood neutral necessarily in respect of creeds, appeared so general, that the danger of cultivating the head more than the heart was a real one. The American youth shunned illiteracy as a vice. Public schools were provided at all the large centres, and scarcely a village could be found at the north where the poor might not at least acquire the rudiments of an education. The New Englander, whose ancestors founded this free-school system, with his superior faculty for imparting instruction and discipline, still supplied the rest of the Union with the best teachers, the newest educational ideas, and the great host of elementary text-books. In New York and the New England States there had been a revival of education since 1817, and the present effort was to raise the standard of public instruction, and form the teachers into a stronger, abler, and more permanent corps of workers than before. The Lancastrian system of study, too mechanical in its operation, yielded to the inductive methods of Pestalozzi. Since each State provided its own means of instruction at discretion, national uniformity in this respect was impossible; but of States liberal in proportion to their numbers, none could surpass Connecticut, whose well-managed school fund now yielded an ample income, and Massachusetts, where the school tax averaged about $350,000 a year. Besides these common schools were private ones, which were quite numerous in the large cities. Colleges sprang up rapidly in this era, more than doubling in number between 1820 and 1835, at which latter date there were 79 in all; most of them founded in the western States, where civilization itself was new, and sheltered, many of them, under the wing of some religious body, for the better training of a ministry. Among the higher institutions of learning, Harvard and Yale stood foremost in the midst

of this increasing competition. But while colleges and academies furnished to those who could afford it the means of liberal education, and men like Everett, Bowditch, and Silliman shone already conspicuous as exponents of American scholarship, the American phenomenon was after all not so much the depth as the diffusion of knowledge. Our scholars might be found superficial in the classics and liberal arts as compared with those of England, Germany, and France; but what European state could show so vast a multitude able to read, write, cipher, and describe the earth's surface? It was the intelligence which pervaded all classes of American society that struck every profound observer from abroad. Here the whole bent of mind was to the practical, for men had neither the time nor the means for mere erudition. Good sense they displayed, whatever subject came uppermost; they were direct in thought and expression, and whatever they knew they could readily apply. One analyzed and resolved a principle from instances; taking a firm hold of facts while searching into their real bearings. Grund, a scholarly German, was moved to declare that with one-tenth of the research an American could formulate results as well as his own countrymen.*

Among such a people as this the increasing wealth of families was sure in time to produce scholars, by affording men of leisure for culture and investigation in special directions. But for the present the competition of American life by no means favored such seclusion; and whether one pursued literature or science, the money question could not be disregarded. Text-books of higher or lower grade held the first place at this period in remunerative authorship; and the Webster spellers and Peter Parley books coined a competence for men who stooped to it. But the foundation of an American literature, better deserving the name, had been laid by 1830; for while Irving's pen charmed the English-speaking race at this period, as he wandered a

* "Germans are the best people in the world for collecting materials; but Americans best understand how to use them." Grund's Americans.

citizen of the world, Cooper, a novelist of decided merit, rose to a trans-Atlantic fame by works which delineated American life alone. Superior in style to Paulding, and more constant to his pen, he fascinated by his romance of the Uncas and Leather-stocking days. Of native poets, Bryant put into his verse the freshness of our rural scenery, and drew lessons usually pensive, but delicate, from purling brooks and the falling leaf. Halleck, Drake, Percival, and Sprague were lyric bards of no mean order to pitch high the patriotic strain. But the American dream of literary ambition was to be more fully realized; and most of the literary men here mentioned drew their income from other and prosaic sources. At this date Boston was esteemed the literary emporium of the Union, and the North American Review, founded there in 1815, encouraged a superior circle of literary critics and teachers. With Channing in the pulpit, and Webster, Edward Everett, and John Quincy Adams in the forum, this city might well boast of eloquence. The book publishers, too, made Boston and Philadelphia their chief headquarters; but, after all, the chief publication of imaginative works in the United States consisted of English reprints. Scott, Bulwer, and the best poets of the mother country were here reproduced in cheap and vulgar style, and circulated broadcast. The hot-pressed and broad-margined quarto, which sold in London at three guineas, came out in America, so the Englishman complained, a four and two-penny duodecimo, like a lord who had exchanged clothes with a beggar. This cheap importation from Great Britain elevated the native taste, and diffused the desire for good reading in our wide community, so that where a good writer influenced thousands at home he might reach tens of thousands in America. But this was a hindrance to the growth of an original American literature, for it lessened the chance of literary remuneration very greatly; and this dependence of one distinct people upon another for its literature was a condition of things wholly peculiar to the United States.

Fugitive poems, tales, and sketches, however, now began

to find a place in the Annuals, which, under such names as Gift, Token, Amaranth, and Hyacinth, had lately sprouted into vigorous life, and held the American market for some twenty years, enhanced in attraction by an improved style of steel engravings. Journalism, too, kept a poet's corner open in its columns. The American newspaper was still an imperfect medium of popular intelligence, grinding out a meagre support to the partners who wrote and circulated it together, the bond slave of party politics and drudge of political leaders. Yet the aggregate circulation and influence of newspapers and the periodical press was already enormous in the United States ; and with changes, now near at hand, in the direction of greater cheapness, attractiveness, and independence, these promised to absorb two-thirds of the time the general public could bestow upon reading matter at all.

What was the probable destiny of this singular and interesting people, children that they were of modern civilization, and whose experience found no parallel in the world's history? De Tocqueville saw, in 1835, two great nations, Russia and the United States, moving rapidly over the face of their respective hemispheres, the one eastward, the other westward; both of obscure origin, and yet so favored by their energy and local situation that the greater fraction of the habitable globe would in all probability come to be shared between them. But studying personally the Anglo-Americans, he had grave doubts whether their present Union would long endure. The reciprocal interests of all sections were, he confessed, favorable to the common tie; there were no natural barriers between the several States. But slavery attacked the nation indirectly in its manners; and in the South, under the influences of that system, a society was taking form essentially different in character and temperament from the rest of the people. In this divergence, not so much of national interests as of national character, conjoined with the rapid expansion of the American territory and the

complexity of the political system, he foresaw, as he thought, the final downfall of the Union. Already did the preponderant force seem to him to lie in States rather than the general government, while the decline of national authority forced that government to compromise and yield whenever a State showed rebellious symptoms. He failed, however, to do justice to the national temper and spirit of harmony which prompted such concessions; nor did he realize that, whenever pushed to an extremity, as later happened, the people would rally in their might to uphold the constitution, the laws, and the sacred rights of the majority; and clearly comprehending, themselves, how the common interests, the common weal, demanded the preservation of the Union, would preserve that Union at all hazards, like men of conscience and patriots, against the violence of members and a minority. Grund, with a clearer appreciation, saw, underlying all this State pride, a vital national sentiment; and the progress of the west he pronounced with just forecast the greatest safeguard of the union and liberties of this people. But whether the American Union could long endure or not, De Tocqueville himself admitted, like Grund, what the spirit of prophecy must still conclude, that no central inefficiency, no dissolution even of the general bond, would eradicate or seriously change the republican system, carefully implanted in each State at its creation. The American idea would go on influencing the political society of the western continent, and, by its expanding force in each individual citizen, throwing out new settlements on the frontiers dedicated to self-government and equal rights. With States well organized under a general government, territorial extension would continue in the natural course of events as this population increased. No counterpoise appeared to American progress westward or southward. Our march to the Pacific ocean would be steady and irresistible. Mexico and the republics towards the isthmus, already experimenting feebly with institutions they had modelled upon ours, were at the mercy of Anglo-American

sovereignty unless they could build up their own. By conquest, or, better still, by the inspiration of external example, the United States would in time raise these people to a higher level of prosperity. Some of them, perhaps, would stretch out their arms and implore us to receive them. One constitution might come to embrace eventually all the inhabitants of North America from the St. Lawrence to the isthmus as a single confederate nation; nor, possibly, would the isthmus barrier prove the last.

This, then, would be the American problem for coming centuries, and surely a grave one for long political experience to determine,—not whether negro slavery in the United States should co-exist side by side with freedom, for the statistics of each new decade brought that hidden page closer to the light on which it was written that the American Union was fated to be free; but whether, this full freedom once attained, those rights of self-government in which we exulted were a race heritage, to be confined to the descendants of English colonists alone, or a boon, rather, of which all races, the Spanish-American, the Indian and half-breed, the negro, the chance Asiatic wandering to these shores, might equally partake. Should the latter solution prove the true one, the Anglo-American would in the end regenerate and shape by the force of his uplifting example the whole human society.

APPENDIX.

A. ELECTORAL VOTE BY STATES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT, 1817–1831.

ELECTORAL VOTE OF 1820.

	States.	President.			Vice-President.						Total.
		James Monroe, of Va.	John Q. Adams, of Mass.	Vacancies.	D. D. Tompkins, of N. Y.	R. Stockton, of N. J.	Daniel Rodney, of Del.	R. G. Harper of Md.	Richard Rush, of Pa.	Vacancies.	
1	Alabama	3	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	3
2	Connecticut	9	....	....	9	....	....	....	....	....	9
3	Delaware	4	....	....	....	....	4	....	....	....	4
4	Georgia	8	....	....	8	....	....	....	....	....	8
5	Illinois	3	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	3
6	Indiana	3	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	3
7	Kentucky	12	....	....	12	....	....	....	....	....	12
8	Louisiana	3	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	3
9	Maine	9	....	....	9	....	....	....	....	....	9
10	Maryland	11	....	....	10	....	....	1	....	....	11
11	Massachusetts	15	....	....	7	8	....	....	....	....	15
12	Mississippi	2	....	1	2	....	....	....	....	1	3
13	Missouri	3	....	....	3	....	....	....	....	....	3
14	New Hampshire	7	1	....	7	....	....	....	1	....	8
15	New Jersey	8	....	....	8	....	....	....	....	....	8
16	New York	29	....	....	29	....	....	....	....	....	29
17	North Carolina	15	....	....	15	....	....	....	....	....	15
18	Ohio	8	....	....	8	....	....	....	....	....	8
19	Pennsylvania	24	....	1	24	....	....	....	....	1	25
20	Rhode Island	4	....	....	4	....	....	....	....	....	4
21	South Carolina	11	....	....	11	....	....	....	....	....	11
22	Tennessee	7	....	1	7	....	....	....	....	1	8
23	Vermont	8	....	....	8	....	....	....	....	....	8
24	Virginia	25	....	....	25	....	....	....	....	....	25
	Total	231	1	3	218	8	4	1	1	3	235

ELECTORAL VOTE OF 1824.*

	States.	President.					Vice-President.							Total.
		A. Jackson, of Tenn.	J. Q. Adams, of Mass.	W. H. Crawford, of Ga.	Henry Clay, of Ky.	Vacancies.	J. C. Calhoun, of S. C.	N. Sanford, of N. Y.	N. Macon, of N. C.	A. Jackson, of Tenn.	M. Van Buren, of N. Y.	Henry Clay, of Ky.	Vacancies.	
1	Alabama	5	....	....	....	..	5	....	....	....	....	....	....	5
2	Connecticut	....	8	....	....	..	....	....	....	8	....	....	....	8
3	Delaware	....	1	2	....	..	1	....	....	....	....	2	....	3
4	Georgia	....	....	9	....	..	....	....	....	....	9	....	....	9
5	Illinois	2	1	....	....	..	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	3
6	Indiana	5	....	....	....	..	5	....	....	....	....	....	....	5
7	Kentucky	....	....	....	14	..	7	7	....	....	....	....	....	14
8	Louisiana	3	2	....	....	..	5	....	....	....	....	....	....	5
9	Maine	....	9	....	....	..	9	....	....	....	....	....	....	9
10	Maryland	7	3	1	....	..	10	....	....	1	....	....	....	11
11	Massachusetts	....	15	....	....	..	15	....	....	....	....	....	....	15
12	Mississippi	3	....	....	....	..	3	....	....	....	....	....	....	3
13	Missouri	....	....	....	3	..	....	....	....	3	....	....	....	3
14	New Hampshire	....	8	....	....	..	7	....	....	1	....	....	....	8
15	New Jersey	8	....	....	....	..	8	....	....	....	....	....	....	8
16	New York	1	26	5	4	..	29	7	....	....	....	....	....	36
17	North Carolina	15	....	....	....	..	15	....	....	....	....	....	....	15
18	Ohio	....	....	....	16	..	....	16	....	....	....	....	....	16
19	Pennsylvania	28	....	....	....	..	28	....	....	....	....	....	....	28
20	Rhode Island	....	4	....	....	..	3	....	....	....	....	....	1	4
21	South Carolina	11	....	....	....	..	11	....	....	....	....	....	....	11
22	Tennessee	11	....	....	....	..	11	....	....	....	....	....	....	11
23	Vermont	....	7	....	....	..	7	....	....	....	....	....	....	7
24	Virginia	....	....	24	....	..	....	....	24	....	....	....	....	24
	Total	99	84	41	37	..	182	30	24	13	9	2	1	261

*No candidate having received a majority of the votes for President, the House of Representatives elected J. Q. Adams.

ELECTORAL VOTE OF 1828.

	States.	President.		Vice-President.			Total.
		A. Jackson, of Tenn.	J. Q. Adams, of Mass.	J. C. Calhoun, of S. C.	R. Rush, of Pa.	Wm. Smith, of S. C.	
1	Alabama	5		5			5
2	Connecticut		8		8		8
3	Delaware		3		3		3
4	Georgia	9		2		7	9
5	Illinois	3		3			3
6	Indiana	5		5			5
7	Kentucky	14		14			14
8	Louisiana	5		5			5
9	Maine	1	8	1	8		9
10	Maryland	5	6	5	6		11
11	Massachusetts		15		15		15
12	Mississippi	3		3			3
13	Missouri	3		3			3
14	New Hampshire		8		8		8
15	New Jersey		8		8		8
16	New York	20	16	20	16		36
17	North Carolina	15		15			15
18	Ohio	16		16			16
19	Pennsylvania	28		28			28
20	Rhode Island		4		4		4
21	South Carolina	11		11			11
22	Tennessee	11		11			11
23	Vermont		7		7		7
24	Virginia	24		24			24
	Total	178	83	171	83	7	261

B. LENGTH OF SESSIONS OF CONGRESS, 1817–1831.

No. of Congress.	No. of Session.	TIME OF SESSION.
15th.	1st.	December 1st, 1817—April 20th, 1818.
	2d.	November 16th, 1818—March 3d, 1819.
16th.	1st.	December 6th, 1819—May 15th, 1820.
	2d.	November 13th, 1820—March 3d, 1821.
17th.	1st.	December 3d, 1821—May 8th, 1822.
	2d.	December 2d, 1822—March 3d, 1823.
18th.	1st.	December 1st, 1823—May 27th, 1824.
	2d.	December 6th, 1924—March 3d, 1825.
19th.	1st.	December 5th, 1825—May 22d, 1826.
	2d.	December 4th, 1826—March 3d, 1827.
20th.	1st.	December 3d, 1827—May 26th, 1828.
	2d.	December 1st, 1828—March 3d, 1829.
21st.	1st.	December 7th, 1829—May 31st, 1830.
	2d.	December 6th, 1830—March 3d, 1831.

AUTHOR'S FINAL NOTES.

1904.

I. THE CALHOUN CORRESPONDENCE.—The correspondence of John C. Calhoun, which had disappeared during the conflict and confusion of Civil War, was found and procured, a few years ago, by Professor J. F. Jameson, now of the University of Chicago, and, under his editorial supervision, was lately published at length among the collections of the American Historical Association. (See Report of American Historical Association, 1899, vol. 2.) A careful study of this important material confirms the present author in the general estimate of this famous statesman's character and political motives, as previously developed in this and the succeeding volumes of History. For this estimate was based upon Calhoun's works and correspondence, published long ago, aided by such unpublished letters, besides, as were found accessible when the text of the narrative was written, particularly those contained in President Monroe's MSS. It corresponded, moreover, with the impressions recorded by Calhoun's ablest and best informed contemporaries; by distinguished statesmen, such as John Quincy Adams, Benton, Clay and McLean, who studied him closely and observed his course of action for many years with the best of opportunities.

Calhoun bore himself much the same in his private as in his public correspondence. Both to the outer world and to those most intimate with him the strain of his intercourse was dignified, didactic, and without much familiarity; personal details, confidential statements or trivialities find little part in his letters; and there is hardly a suggestion of general tastes or habits of study on his part outside the political world in which his ambition was centred. The correspondence to be here noted was chiefly with friends and disciples in the South whose sectional plans and sympathies were in general harmony with his own.

Monroe's Administration. *Pages* 77, 168, 237, 267, 312.

Calhoun is seen in 1822 nourishing Presidential aspirations, measuring himself against his fellow-Carolinian, Lowndes, and conciliating support in Pennsylvania. He calls Crawford's adherents "the radicals." (Am. Hist. Assn. Report, 1899, Vol. 2, 201, 204, 206, 210.) He writes, however, July 3, 1824, to a friend: being now a candidate for the Vice-Presidency, he claims the support of Virginia, inasmuch as he has never uttered a sentence that should offend the most ardent supporter of State rights, in which respect his character had beeen grossly misrepresented. He admits having advocated that Congress had power to incorporate a National Bank; but so had Jefferson, Madison and Monroe. He admits himself in favor of internal improvements; but so had Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, and he has not committed himself beyond conceding the right of Congress to appropriate for such purposes. (Ib.) See letter of 1824 as to designs of the Holy Alliance. (Ib. 218.)

John Quincy Adams's Administration. *Pages* 347, 371, 430, 446.

Calhoun in 1825 expressed his wish for an amendment to the constitution, giving the ultimate choice to the people, with a second trial as between the highest candidates, where no one has received a majority. (Am. Hist. Assn. 1899, Vol. 2, p. 230.) He is disposed to support the measures of the new administration so long as it acts on the Monroe policy; but he rebukes the appointment of Clay to Adams's cabinet. (Ib. 230.) He asserts his devotion to the power of the people, as against that of political leaders. (Ib. 232.) By 1827 he is evidently opposed to the Adams administration and its measures and aids Jackson covertly. (Ib. 240, 242.) He deplores, in 1827–28, the possible danger of arraying the great geographical interests against one another, in framing the tariff, and considers it oppressive to make one section tributary to the other. (Ib. 249, 250.) He writes rather dispassionately of the excess of feelings manifested against the high tariff by men of the staple States, but feels confident that attachment to the Union "remains unshaken with the great body of our citizens." Yet laws should not bear unequally. (Ib. 266.) In 1828 he reaffirms his kindly disposition to both Adams and Jackson, at the pre-

ceding Presidential canvass, and deplores the coalition of Adams and Clay with its dangerous precedent, as the cause of his present coldness towards the administration. (Ib. 269.) Later, November, 1842, he states that the adoption of Clay's American system by Adams caused his opposition to the latter's administration. (Ib. 519, 520.)

Andrew Jackson's First Administration. Pages 498, 503, 505.

Calhoun, in March, 1830, denies that he has come out against the United States Bank; he has not moved at all on that subject. (Am. Hist. Assn. 1899, Vol. 2, 271.) "My great ambition," he writes, May 12, 1830, "is to see our country free, united and happy, and, placed where I am, I owe it as a duty to myself and my country to preserve unimpaired the public confidence." He waits accordingly to see whether Jackson will offer himself for a new term. (Ib. 273.) But the rupture with the President came, in early 1831, over the Seminole consultations. Calhoun, January 13, 1831, claims to have acted on the defensive, and he will not publish unless necessary. (Ib. 279.) He will have no renewal of intercourse with the President until the latter retracts what he has done: "his friends are much alarmed." (p. 280.) He advises friends in South Carolina, January 15, 1831, to nullify "the unconstitutional tariff acts"; the general government will hold on; it is useless to expect the South to be united with Jackson. (p. 281–283.) Morbid gloom now tinctures his correspondence with his friends. (p. 292. See, further, Final Notes in next volume.)

II. THE JACKSON AND VAN BUREN PAPERS. These two valuable collections have quite recently been transferred by the respective custodians and placed in the Library of Congress. These papers were not open to inspection when this History was first written, but the author procured some indirect information. (See Prefaces to volumes III and IV.)

JAN 3 - 1931